This is a digital copy of a book that was preserved for generations on library shelves before it was carefully scanned by Google as part of a project to make the world's books discoverable online.

It has survived long enough for the copyright to expire and the book to enter the public domain. A public domain book is one that was never subject to copyright or whose legal copyright term has expired. Whether a book is in the public domain may vary country to country. Public domain books are our gateways to the past, representing a wealth of history, culture and knowledge that's often difficult to discover.

Marks, notations and other marginalia present in the original volume will appear in this file - a reminder of this book's long journey from the publisher to a library and finally to you.

Usage guidelines

Google is proud to partner with libraries to digitize public domain materials and make them widely accessible. Public domain books belong to the public and we are merely their custodians. Nevertheless, this work is expensive, so in order to keep providing this resource, we have taken steps to prevent abuse by commercial parties, including placing technical restrictions on automated querying.

We also ask that you:

+ *Make non-commercial use of the files* We designed Google Book Search for use by individuals, and we request that you use these files for personal, non-commercial purposes.

+ *Refrain from automated querying* Do not send automated queries of any sort to Google's system: If you are conducting research on machine translation, optical character recognition or other areas where access to a large amount of text is helpful, please contact us. We encourage the use of public domain materials for these purposes and may be able to help.

+ *Maintain attribution* The Google "watermark" you see on each file is essential for informing people about this project and helping them find additional materials through Google Book Search. Please do not remove it.

+ *Keep it legal* Whatever your use, remember that you are responsible for ensuring that what you are doing is legal. Do not assume that just because we believe a book is in the public domain for users in the United States, that the work is also in the public domain for users in other countries. Whether a book is still in copyright varies from country to country, and we can't offer guidance on whether any specific use of any specific book is allowed. Please do not assume that a book's appearance in Google Book Search means it can be used in any manner anywhere in the world. Copyright infringement liability can be quite severe.

About Google Book Search

Google's mission is to organize the world's information and to make it universally accessible and useful. Google Book Search helps readers discover the world's books while helping authors and publishers reach new audiences. You can search through the full text of this book on the web at `http://books.google.com/`

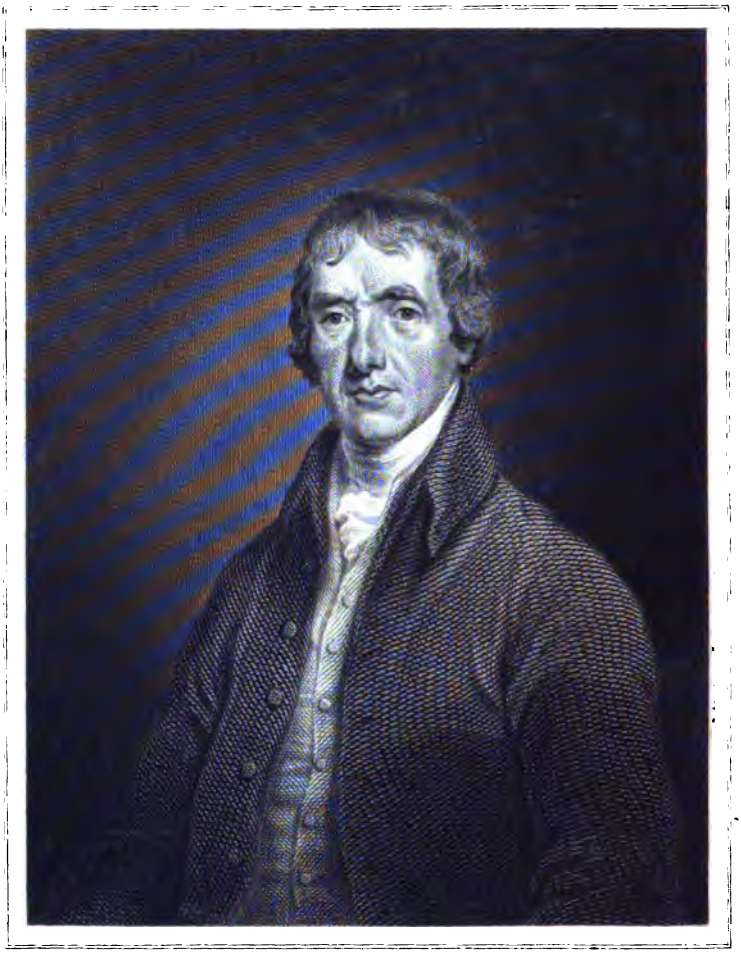
C
Aiken

Harvard Divinity School

ANDOVER-HARVARD THEOLOGICAL
LIBRARY

MDCCCCX

CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS



Engraved from a Picture by

John Aiken, M.D.

London, Published by Baldwin, Cradock & Joy, May 1, 1823

MEMOIR

OF

JOHN AIKIN, M.D.

By LUCY AIKIN.

WITH

A SELECTION OF HIS

MISCELLANEOUS PIECES,

BIOGRAPHICAL, MORAL, AND CRITICAL.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

DIVINITY SCHOOL
LIBRARY.
HARVARD UNIVERSITY

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR BALDWIN, CRADOCK, AND JOY.

1823.

C
Aiken

Harvard

ANDOVER-H

CAMBRIDG

MEMOIR

OF

JOHN AIKIN, M.D.

By LUCY AIKIN.

WITH

A SELECTION OF HIS

MISCELLANEOUS PIECES,

BIOGRAPHICAL, MORAL, AND CRITICAL.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

DIVINITY SCHOOL
LIBRARY.
HARVARD UNIVERSITY

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR BALDWIN, CRADOCK, AND JOY.

1821.

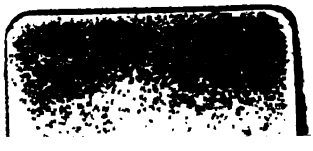
C
Aiken

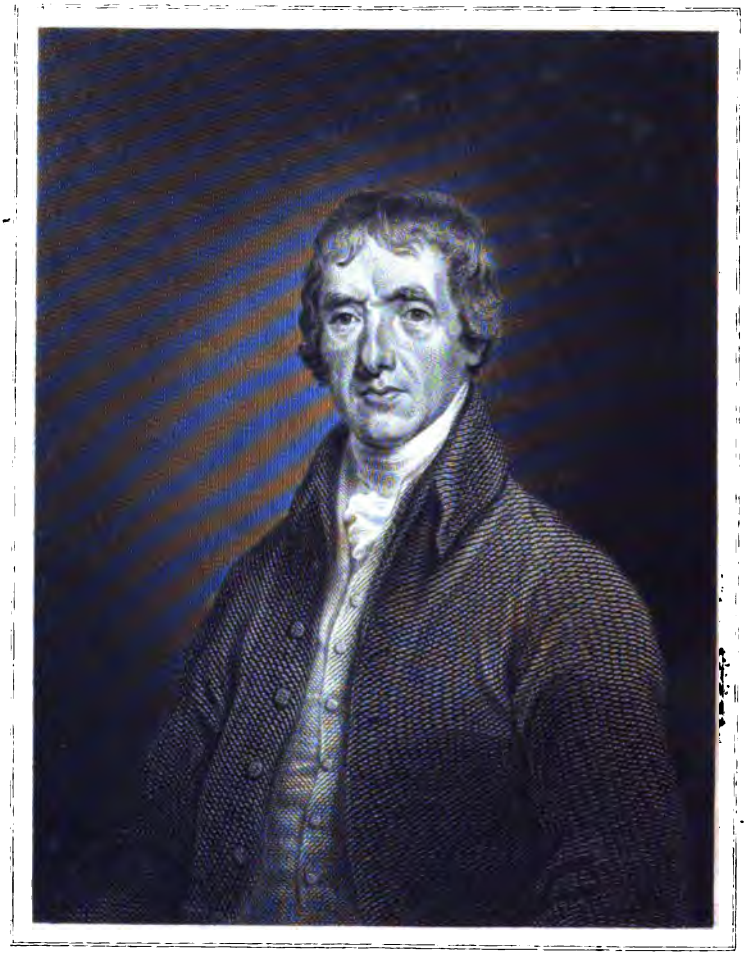
Harvard Divinity School

ANDOVER-HARVARD THEOLOGICAL
LIBRARY

MDCCCCX

CAMBRIDGE, MASSACHUSETTS





Engraved from a Picture

John Aikin M.D.

London, Published by Baldwin, Cradock & Joy May 1, 1821.

MEMOIR

OF

JOHN AIKIN, M.D.

By LUCY AIKIN.

WITH

A SELECTION OF HIS

MISCELLANEOUS PIECES,

BIOGRAPHICAL, MORAL, AND CRITICAL.

IN TWO VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

DIVINITY SCHOOL
LIBRARY.
HARVARD UNIVERSITY

LONDON:

PRINTED FOR BALDWIN, CRADOCK, AND JOY.

1823.

PRINTED BY RICHARD TAYLOR,
SHOE LANE, LONDON.

TO

JOHN HAYGARTH, M.D.

IN TESTIMONY OF HIS LONG, AFFECTIONATE, AND

NEVER INTERRUPTED FRIENDSHIP

WITH THE SUBJECT OF THE FOLLOWING MEMOIR;

AND OF HER OWN HIGH ESTEEM FOR HIS CHARACTER

AND GRATITUDE FOR MANY FAVORS,

THE EDITOR VERY RESPECTFULLY INSCRIBES

THESE VOLUMES.

PREFACE.

A FEW words will suffice to explain to the reader the object of the present publication, and the plan on which it has been conducted.

To make known to the world as a *man* one with whom it had so long been acquainted as an *author*, appeared to the editor both a due tribute to the talents and virtues of her father, and a proper indulgence of a species of curiosity not less reasonable than it is natural.

The generally even tenor of Dr. Aikin's life, and the retirement from active pursuits in which the later years of it were passed, seemed to her no sufficient objections to making it the theme of a detailed narration;—for, besides that a man of merit, in any class and under any circumstances,

may be accounted a worthy object of contemplation to his fellow-men,—it is well known that some of the most instructive and acceptable pieces of biography have been such as derived their interest from the unfoldings of character and sentiment, rather than the bustle of incident or the splendor of description.

Nothing, however, could be further from her design than to intrude upon the attention of the public by the introduction of anecdotes or observations not strictly connected with the subject of the memoir, and by which its effect as a *moral portraiture* would be rather weakened than enforced; on this account, only such extracts from Dr. Aikin's correspondence have been admitted, as appeared essential to the history of his life or the exhibition of his opinions and feelings on important topics; and in the composition of the memoir itself, a similar forbearance has been exercised.

But the judgements passed by a man upon the moral and intellectual qualities of those with whom he lived or acted, form a

very important feature in his own character; and several such judgements of Dr. Aikin's have here been recorded, by appending to his own memoir those biographical accounts of several of the most distinguished of his literary friends which it fell to his lot to compose. From these, a competent idea may be formed of his mode of estimating various kinds of merit and excellence; and it is hoped that the suppression of such proofs of his just appreciation of *living worth*, as his private letters and the recollection of his conversation would readily have supplied to the editor, will be ascribed to none but its true motives —delicacy towards individuals, and respect for the implied confidences of family intercourse.

The remaining contents of these volumes, consisting of critical essays on several of the English poets, and of a selection of miscellaneous papers, have already appeared before the public;—the essays, except that on Gondibert, in the shape of prefaces to editions of the respective poets,

—the miscellaneous papers, as contributions to different periodical works. But it was believed that it would prove agreeable to many readers to find that which was dispersed, collected, and that which was anonymous, avowed; and the editor was solicitous that the knowledge of what appeared to her some of the choicest products of her father's pen, should thus be revived and extended.

The subjoined list of Dr. Aikin's principal works is appended as a kind of summary of his efforts in the cause of useful knowledge and elegant literature.

Observations on the external Use of Preparations of Lead, with some general Remarks on Topical Medicines.

Thoughts on Hospitals.

Essays on Song-writing, with a Collection of such English Songs as are most eminent for poetical merit.

Miscellaneous Pieces in prose (written in conjunction with Mrs. Barbauld).

An Essay on the Application of Natural History to Poetry.

The Manners of the Germans and the Life of Agricola, translated from Tacitus, with copious Notes.

Translation of Baumé's Manuel de Chymie.

Biographical Memoirs of Medicine in Great Britain to the time of Harvey.

Lewis's Materia Medica, re-edited with large additions.

A Manual of Materia Medica.

England Delineated.

Poems.

A View of the Character and public Services of J. Howard, Esq.

Evenings at Home (written in conjunction with Mrs. Barbauld).

Letters from a Father to his Son on various Topics relative to Literature and the Conduct of Life.

A Description of the Country from Thirty to Forty miles round Manchester.

General Biography in 10 vols. 4to. (The articles marked *A*, amounting to nearly half the work.)

Select Eulogies of the Members of the French Academy by D'Alembert, translated; with a Preface and Notes.

The Arts of Life.

The Woodland Companion, or an Account of British Forest Trees.

Translation of Zschokke's Account of the Destruc-

tion of the Democratical Cantons of Switzerland; with a Preface and Supplement.

Letters to a Young Lady on a Course of English Poetry.

Geographical Delineations.

Memoirs of the Life of Huet by himself, translated from the Latin, with copious Notes biographical and critical.

Vocal Poetry. (A much-altered edition of Essays on Song-writing.)

Essays Literary and Miscellaneous.

The Lives of John Selden and of Archbishop Usher, with Biographical Notes.

Annals of the Reign of George III.

Select Works of the British Poets, with biographical and critical Prefaces.

Stoke Newington, June, 1823.

CONTENTS OF VOLUME I.

	Page.
Memoir of John Aikin, M.D. - - - - - -	1

APPENDIX.

(A).	Descriptions of Vegetables from the Roman Poets	277
(B).	Biographical Account of the Rev. Dr. Enfield -	293
(C).	Description of the Country about Dorking -	311
(D).	Biographical Account of Richard Pulteney, M.D.	330
(E).	Memoir of Gilbert Wakefield, B.A. - - -	346
(F).	Memoir of Joseph Priestley, LL.D. F.R.S. -	366
(G).	Memoir of James Currie, M.D. - - -	393
(H).	Memoir of the Rev. George Walker - - -	406

MEMOIR

OF

JOHN AIKIN, M.D.

JOHN AIKIN, only son of the Rev. John Aikin, D.D., by Jane his wife, daughter of the Rev. John Jennings, teacher of a dissenting academy at Kibworth, was born at the same village of Kibworth-Harcourt in Leicestershire on January 15, 1747. His father, whom he never mentioned but with reverence, was the son of a native of Scotland settled as a shopkeeper in London; originally destined for a commercial life, he had occupied for a short time the situation of French clerk in a merchant's counting-house, when, the air of London disagreeing with his health, he was placed for a time as a pupil with Dr. Doddridge, who succeeded Mr. Jennings in his academy and afterwards removed it to Northampton. In this situa-

tion the bent of his mind towards learning so strongly manifested itself, that he obtained his father's permission to change his views and devote himself to the Christian ministry. After finishing his course with Dr. Doddridge, he completed with distinction an extensive plan of study at the University of Aberdeen, and became Dr. Doddridge's assistant on his return. A respectable congregation at Leicester soon afterwards elected him their pastor; but just as he was entering upon the duties of his office, a disease of the lungs permanently incapacitated him as a preacher, and rendered him a valetudinarian for life.

Under these unfortunate circumstances, no other line of life remained open to him than that of an instructor of youth; and after a short period of partnership with a gentleman of the name of Lee, he married, and opened a school of his own at Kibworth, which his diligence, his learning and abilities, and, above all, the excellence of his moral character, soon raised into repute. His two children, Mrs. Barbauld and the subject of this Memoir, were born to him while occupying this station of modest usefulness; and, next to the happiness of being the child of such a parent, his son always esteemed it his highest privilege to have been the pupil of such a teacher. He would also mention that his father was careful to guard him against the

peculiar temptations and inconveniences attending the situation of school-master's son; strictly forbearing to question him on any occasion respecting the behaviour of his young companions, and strongly impressing him with the meanness of tale-bearing: so completely, he added, was he regarded as one of the boys, that he was more than once appointed by the rest to stand sentinel while they were engaged in stripping his father's fruit trees.

The merit of the Rev. Mr. Aikin was at length the means of recommending him to a situation more worthy of him. A dissenting academy on a liberal plan having been set up at Warrington in Lancashire, the trustees invited him to undertake the office of classical tutor; this he accepted, and in the year 1756 removed thither with his family.

His son, though only in his 12th year, was so forward in his learning that he was immediately entered among the students and attended the lectures of his father and the other tutors. Three diligent years past in this situation, enabled him to add a considerable superstructure of various knowledge to the firm grammatical foundation previously laid at Kibworth, and, what was of still more importance, imbued him indelibly with that love of letters which became at once the ornament

and safeguard of his youth, and the occupation and solace of every succeeding period of his life. It was intended by this learned education to fit him for the study of divinity; but the weakness of his voice, and perhaps the native vivacity of his temper, caused a change in his destination; he made his option in favour of the medical profession, and was in consequence articled to Mr. Garthshore, a surgeon and apothecary in considerable practice at Uppingham, in Rutlandshire.

There was no portion of his time which, on the review of life, Dr. Aikin regarded with so little complacency as the three important years he was doomed to drag on in this irksome and uninstructive situation. To have placed him in it, he regarded as an error of judgment ascribable to a prepossession, frequent among parents of a serious turn and small acquaintance with the world, to which he observed that many young men within the sphere of his acquaintance had fallen lamentable victims. This prepossession consists in an undue preference of remote and obscure situations for youths during the period of apprenticeship, as sheltered from the temptations of great towns and cities, and comparatively favourable to innocence and virtue. "What," he would say, "can you possibly do worse with a youth than send him, from the comforts of a lettered and civilized home,

to a master, probably of sordid habits, in a place where he *can* find none but gross and vulgar company if he seeks for any, and where sotting and low vice will be the only pastimes offered him for the amusement of his hours of leisure?" Such a situation nearly, was his own at Uppingham, where he did not form a single intimacy. An elder apprentice little congenial in manners or studies, was the only companion of his own class that the place afforded; the inn was the sole place of social recreation, and the landlord's daughter "the Cynosure of neighbouring eyes." Nothing but his strong love of literature, and the conscious superiority with which it already inspired him, could probably have saved him at this time from sinking into a state of melancholy listlessness, though the restraints of morality and religion should have withheld him from rushing to degradation and ruin. But this preservative proved, happily, effectual; he applied himself with diligence and remarkable success to the business of his profession, conciliated by his excellent qualities and pleasing manners the esteem and affection of the family in which he was domesticated, and fulfilled this period of his probation creditably if not happily.

The monotony of his residence at Uppingham was however occasionally broken by visits to the neighbouring town of Leicester, made under cir-

Mr. Aikin had not completed the third year of his term at Uppingham, when Mr. Garthshore made over his business to a successor, having determined to take a doctor's degree at Edinburgh. He prevailed upon Mr. Pulteney to adopt a similar resolution; but as it was this gentleman's purpose to return to Leicester, it was agreed that Mr. Aikin should take charge of his patients during his absence; and he spent on this occasion two or three happy months in that town; afterwards, there was no adequate motive for his remaining at Uppingham, and he was thus freed from his indentures two or three years earlier than the usual period.

At the immature age, as he afterwards regarded it, of eighteen, he was now sent to pursue his medical studies at the university of Edinburgh, then in high repute, and boasting the distinguished names of Black, Monro and Cullen, among its professors. This was, on the whole, a happy period of his life; he rejoiced in his liberation from a state of irksome dependence; he was animated by the society of companions eager in the same occupations and the same amusements, and prone, like himself, to knit those bonds of friendships which double the pleasures of youth, and often survive to soothe the cares of maturer life; above all, he entered with ardor into the business of the

place, and daily saw fresh reason to congratulate himself on his choice of a profession. An agreeable picture of the state of his mind at this period, is afforded by the following passage of a letter to his dearest friend,—his affectionate and accomplished sister.

"This I can assure you, I never found study so agreeable to me as at present. I am very much surprised the study of the structure and uses of the parts of the human body is not taken into the plan of a learned education; surely no part of knowledge can be more noble and entertaining, and more proper for the employment of the faculties; what a pity the mind and body should be so little acquainted with each other! It is indeed a subject full of doubts and difficulties; but if men of genius were to apply to it, I should think great discoveries might be made. I often regret Sir Isaac Newton was not an anatomist.

"My only books of amusement are the Latin poets; and among them the elegant and tender Tibullus is my present favourite. I never met with so much softness, such inexpressibly tender strokes, as in his elegies; in my opinion there are some single lines of his worth all the works of all the poets of his class put together. It is a pity there is no good translation of him; Hammond indeed has taken a good deal from him with the true

spirit of the original. Of what real consequence, my dear sister, is something of a taste for polite literature! It promotes cheerfulness with innocence; and by that means is an excellent guard against running into vicious pleasures, and against being unfitted by hard study and low spirits for social life. Its chief fault is, being apt to make people vain; and perhaps you will think it has had that effect with me when I tell you, that with the means of bread in my hands and pleasure in my head, I despise the dull tradesman with his thousands, the country booby with his dogs and horses; and, above all, the mere town rake, whose pleasures are meaner and more mistaken."

After two winters and the intermediate summer spent in this school of medicine, Mr. Aikin, in May, 1766, quitted Scotland, and went to pass a few months of leisure, but by no means of idleness, under the paternal roof. The flourishing state of the Warrington academy at this period, had redeemed this remote spot from barbarism, and rendered it a favorite haunt of the Muses. Among the students were several youths of promising abilities and ingenuous manners, who in after life reflected honor on the place of their education, both by their acquirements and their lasting attachment to their teachers. The tutors were; for the mathematics, Mr. Holt, a man whose

whole soul was absorbed by his science; for modern languages and some other branches of knowledge, Dr. Reinhold Forster the naturalist, who afterwards accompanied Captain Cook in his circumnavigation; the Rev. Mr. Aikin, on the death of the celebrated Dr. John Taylor, had succeeded to the post of tutor in divinity, and lectured with distinguished ability in ethics and metaphysics as well as in theology; and the department of classics and polite literature was filled by Dr. Priestley. An excellent set of lectures in history, afterwards published, was delivered by this eminent person, who had also recently constructed his ingenious biographical chart; and, with that versatility which distinguished his powerful genius, was studying the phenomena of electricity, and commencing his original experiments on that branch of natural philosophy. The most cordial intimacy subsisted among the tutors and their families, with whom also the elder students associated on terms of easy and affectionate intercourse; and while the various branches of human knowledge occupied their graver hours, the moments of recreation were animated by sports of wit and ingenuity, well adapted to nerve the wing of youthful genius.

But the claims of an active profession quickly summoned away Mr. Aikin from the tranquil

pursuits of learned leisure; circumstances also required of him the renewed sacrifice of that independence which he had enjoyed under the free system of a Scotch university; and he submitted, without repining, to become once more a pupil, under Mr. Charles White, a skilful surgeon then rising to eminence at Manchester.

Few situations of the kind could have been better adapted to promote either his improvement or his happiness. The extensive private practice of Mr. White, and his connection with a large infirmary, allowed his pupil full scope for that love of employment which marked him at all periods of his life; no disagreeable services of any kind were imposed upon him, and he found himself treated in the family in all respects as a gentleman. The town of Manchester, also, afforded him respectable and agreeable society to fill the intervals of business and study; and he had the good fortune to form a few congenial friendships which ended only with the lives of the parties. Among those with whom his connection was most intimate and durable, may be named, the late Mr. Thomas Henry, Mr. James Touchet, the late T. B. Bayley, Esq. of Hope, and the late Thomas Percival, M. D. who was previously known to him at Warrington and as a fellow-student at Edinburgh.

Professional pursuits took the lead with him at this time even in his voluntary studies, and he mentions in one of his letters that he seldom transgressed the rule of occupying a portion, at least, of each day's reading in medical works. He translated from the French the whole of Pouteau's Mélanges de Chirurgie[a], and composed an Essay on the Ligature of Arteries afterwards published with Mr. White's Cases in Surgery.

But the Muses still held divided empire in his heart; his correspondence with his sister was thickly interspersed with critical remarks on the Latin and English poets, not forgetting, among the latter, our early English dramatists, Massinger, Shirley, and Beaumont and Fletcher; whom some happy chance had introduced to his acquaintance, and for whom he had the courage to express all his admiration, at a period when the French taste had banished them almost entirely both from the stage and the closet. He also began to occupy himself in forming his collection of the choicest songs in our language; and he frequently exercised his own pen, both in verse and prose, in translation and in original composition, trying experiments in different styles, treating a variety of subjects, and seeking to discover where his

[a] This translation was never published.

strength lay. A few of these juvenile effusions he communicated anonymously to a London newspaper, and thus tasted the lively gratification of first seeing himself in print. To his sister, the beloved confident of all his projects, he writes thus on this subject: "I look upon these little essays as the first flights of young birds, which give them boldness and skill to take hereafter a larger circle. I have a strong notion of becoming an author some time or other, though, ten to one, without half the knowledge of my subject that my father has of many on which he is too diffident to give his sentiments to the world."

After a residence of three years in Manchester, he quitted it with sentiments of attachment to its inhabitants which never forsook him, and which were warmly returned on their parts.

To complete his preparation for practice in the branch which he had chosen, that of surgery, nothing was now wanting but an attendance of a few months on the hospital-lectures in London; and thither he bent his course in the winter of the year 1769, and became one of the class of Dr. William Hunter. His maternal uncle, Mr. Arthur Jennings, then resident in Bloomsbury Square, offered him a home in his house during his abode in London; and it was to the opportunities of domestic intercourse afforded by this

situation, that he ultimately owed what he justly regarded as the prime blessing of his life,—his marriage. The object of his choice was Martha, youngest daughter of his worthy uncle by Martha Cornwall his first wife; and he quitted London in the ensuing spring, full of those tender anticipations of conjugal felicity which suited his age and the sensibility of his temper, and which in this instance were destined to experience no disappointment; and anxious only to place himself as speedily as possible in such a situation as might authorise him to claim the promised prize.

The city of Chester was mentioned to him as affording a fair prospect of success in his professional career, and thither he repaired in the autumn of 1770. No proper efforts were wanting on his part to render himself known and acceptable in this new scene of action; he mixed freely with the good society of the place, enjoying greatly the ease and cheerfulness by which it was at that time distinguished; formed several respectable and agreeable intimacies, and gave proofs of his professional abilities by publishing "Observations on the external use of preparations of lead, with some general remarks on topical medicines;" a piece which speedily passed into a second edition, and is still esteemed by good judges a model in its kind.

But he soon became sensible that the ground was pre-occupied at Chester in a manner which left no space for the exertions of a new comer; and after a trial of somewhat more than a year, he quitted the place. Warrington, in the residence of parents whom he revered and loved, in the pleasing associations of youthful days, and in the presence of the academy with its atmosphere of science and literature, possessed unrivalled attractions for him; whose worldly wishes were bounded to a modest competence, while he sought his happiness in elegant and useful knowledge, in the intercourse of a few congenial associates, and the affection of those connected with him by the dearest ties. To Warrington, therefore, he returned, where his natural connections speedily introduced him to moderate business. In the mean time, his short residence at Chester had been productive of many advantages. Besides greatly extending his general acquaintance in the neighbourhood, it had introduced him to some peculiarly valuable connections. It was there that he first became known to that able naturalist and topographer, that lively writer, most agreeable companion, and worthy man the late Thomas Pennant, Esq. In his various tours and journeys this gentleman frequently passed through Warrington during Mr. Aikin's

residence there; and he has acknowledged in print, the information which he received from him on his various topics of local inquiry. An intercourse which was found mutually useful and pleasing was not suffered to languish; Mr. Aikin willingly superintended the printing of such of Mr. Pennant's works as issued from Eyres's press at Warrington; and afterwards, when they were more widely separated in their places of abode, letters were frequently exchanged between them, principally on subjects connected with Mr. Pennant's various pursuits. Into most of these Mr. Aikin entered with deep interest. A value for information of the kind which would now be called *statistical*, was early observable among his predilections, and afterwards produced good fruits to the world. That general taste for the objects of natural history, which was not only a source of pure and elevated enjoyment to himself through all the periods of advancing life, but the inspirer of some of the most agreeable and instructive portions of his various writings, was either first excited, or at least chiefly fostered, by his connection with Mr. Pennant, and the study of his works.

It was at Chester, likewise, that he improved a slight acquaintance which he had formed at Edinburgh with his fellow-student, John Hay-

garth, M. D., into one of the most sincere, cordial, and valuable friendships which cheered and supported him through his earthly pilgrimage;—a friendship tried by long years of continued absence,—by much diversity of tastes, pursuits and connections,—and, above all, by a marked opposition both of political and religious sentiments, when party contests ran the highest; which, nevertheless, through all the mutations of half a century, stood without even a suspicion of insecurity, and yielded at length only to the inevitable stroke which levels all.

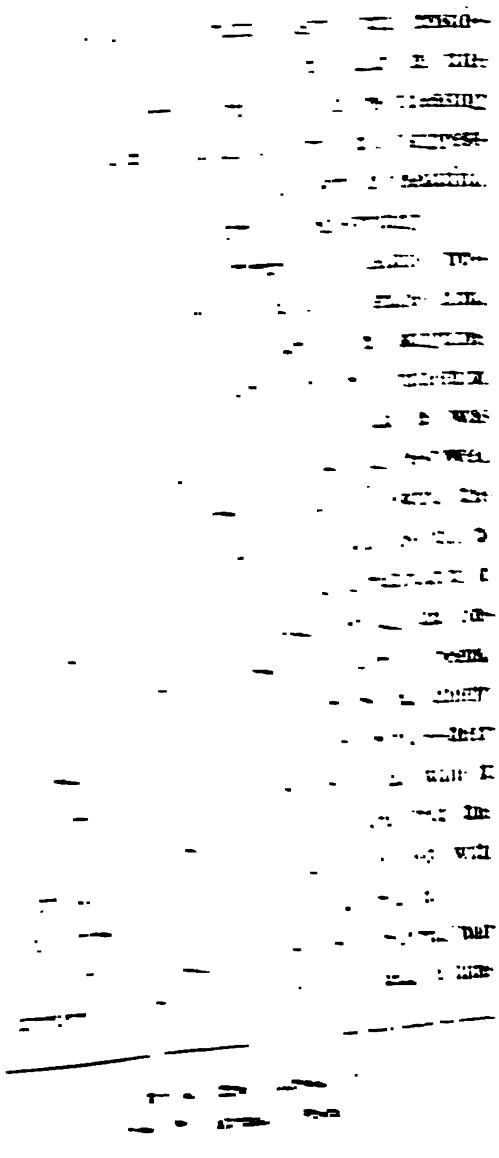
The distance between Chester and Warrington, about twenty miles, was unfavorable to the cultivation of intimacy between the medical friends, but they overcame the difficulty in great measure by appointments at the intermediate village of Frodsham, where they often enjoyed a social meal, and the delights of a few hours of the unreserved communication of sentiments, opinions, plans and projects. A correspondence was also maintained between them ever after, from which many extracts will appear in the progress of this memoir, the letters having been communicated for the purpose by their venerable and amiable possessor.

The first of this epistolary series thus describes the feelings of Mr. Aikin on his change of residence: "It was with a heavy heart that I took my farewell of Chester. On my journey homewards I turned to take a last view of it, and could not help an involuntary invocation of blessing upon it; I then in a melancholy mood jogged slowly home. Chester has been a coy but very agreeable mistress, whom I should probably have courted with success, but that her favors were already engaged. Her reserve began to give way, and I could have been happy as a friend though not as a lover; but being determined to take a partner for life, I was obliged to offer to a more homely but more attainable nymph. To drop metaphors, I shall ever think with pleasure on my short abode at Chester, and shall ever regard many persons there with affection and esteem. To these emotions gratitude will be added when I think of my very agreeable connection with Dr. Haygarth; and the acquisition of such a friend would alone be a compensation for the time spent there."

In the same letter he refers to the manuscript of a professional work by Mr. White, which that gentleman had submitted to the unsparing criticism of himself and his friend; he also men-

tions a pamphlet of his own, entitled Thoughts on Hospitals, which was soon after published, and well received both by medical and general readers.

Almost at the same time, early in 1772, he first ventured to solicit the notice of the public in a character which he never acknowledged as incompatible with his professional one—that of a polite writer and cultivator of elegant literature. His trial-piece was a small volume, entitled *Essays on Song Writing: with a collection of such English Songs as are most eminent for poetical merit.* These essays were four in number; one on Song-writing in general; the other three on the respective classes under which the collection was distributed; Pastoral Songs and Ballads; Passionate and Descriptive; and Witty and Ingenious Songs: they are written with a perspicuity and correctness worthy of the most practised pen, and exhibit that union of sound sense with native taste and feeling, heightened by classical refinement, which is the general character of his critical works. The selection of songs exhibited some of the brightest gems of English poetry, carefully separated from all baser substances. A second edition of this agreeable volume was quickly demanded; and very many years afterwards, the editor was prevailed upon

The fi
the feeli
dence:
my fare
wards
not h
upon
slowl
agre
cour
alre
way
tho
tak
me
dr
on
re
e
a
r


of *Miscellaneous Pieces in Prose;* the first edition of which, printed at Warrington, was soon exhausted, and succeeded by a London one, published by Johnson. The share of Mr. Aikin in this collection was considerably the smallest and least important; the essay on the heroic poem of Gondibert, however, is an elegant piece of criticism, and the fragment of Sir Bertram exhibited inventive powers which he had not before displayed: As "Tales of Terror" were at this time a novelty, it produced a considerable effect, and has been many times republished by the compilers of selections.

The marriage of Miss Aikin, in the summer of 1774, to the Rev. Mr. Barbauld, and her consequent removal to Palgrave in Suffolk, where a life of active occupation awaited her, necessarily dissolved that kind of literary partnership which subsisted between the brother and sister, and to which not only congeniality of tastes and pursuits, but the habit of daily intercourse, was essential. The pain of separation was severely felt by both: but the resource of frequent and intimate correspondence, animated by occasional meetings, remained; and Warrington still afforded to Mr. Aikin, beyond the bounds of his own family, one dear and congenial friend with whom to "take sweet counsel" in all that interested

him, whether as a man or an author. This friend was the Rev. William Enfield, LL.D. at this time a dissenting minister at Warrington, and one of the tutors at the academy; a man esteemed by the public for several useful and acceptable works, and beloved by all who ever knew him. In the Rev. George Walker also, who had succeeded to the office of mathematical tutor at the academy, Mr. Aikin rejoiced to discover a man of strong native genius, interesting in conversation by an uncommon flow of fervid eloquence, proceeding from one of the purest and warmest of human hearts.

Literary occupation had now become to Mr. Aikin one of the habits, and almost the wants, of daily life; and no plan of original composition at this time suggesting itself, he undertook the translation of *Tacitus's Life of Agricola*, which was printed at Warrington in a remarkably correct and elegant manner, together with the original Latin. For a task like this, his exact knowledge of the Latin language, and his concise and energetic style, were equally well adapted; and the success of this first essay induced him some time afterwards to add a translation of the interesting tract *On the Manners of the Germans* by the same author, accompanied by an extensive selection from the learned notes of Brotier. The

two pieces, carefully revised, were many years afterwards reprinted in a single volume, which has passed into the fourth edition; and it has been much regretted by competent judges, that the announcement of a translation of the entire works of this philosophical historian by Mr. Murphy, induced Mr. Aikin to lay aside a similar design which he had formed, and in which he had made considerable progress.

A fresh proof of his industry and spirit of literary enterprise, directed in this instance to the advancement and diffusion of professional knowledge, was soon after afforded by the appearance of his *Specimen of the medical biography of Great Britain, with an address to the public.* This was a great and important undertaking, comprising a history of the progress of medical science in this island, with biographies of the most distinguished practitioners of the healing art, and copious analyses of their writings, with critical observations. The labor and difficulty of the work were much enhanced to Mr. Aikin, by his provincial residence, remote from all assistance of libraries, public or private, and by the ties of a profession which forbade him to travel in search of documents the perusal of which could not otherwise be procured. His specimen however attracted attention, and he received from several quarters useful sugges-

tions and offers of assistance. The late excellent Dr. Fothergill, having, in his summer residences at his seat in Cheshire, become acquainted with Mr. Aikin,—who always retained the highest admiration of his skill as a physician and the sincerest esteem for his personal worth,—offered him books and useful hints, and expressed warm interest in the progress of the work. Mr. Pegge forwarded to him, with some rare black letter tracts, remarks highly characteristic of his own antiquarian tastes; and he entered into some correspondence on the subjeet with Dr. Ducarel. The late Mr. Falconer of Chester communicated some learned remarks. Loans of scarce volumes were procured from the libraries of some colleges at Cambridge, and valuable assistance of various kinds was contributed by Dr. Haygarth. Thus encouraged, he devoted much time and pains to this pursuit: but the difficulties attending the investigation of the earlier and darker periods of medical history were found in the end insuperable; and when, five years afterwards, he published in a single octavo volume, *Biographical Memoirs of Medicine in Great Britain, from the revival of literature to the time of Hervey*, he was obliged to explain the causes of this limitation of his plan. Situated as he was, he found that printed books were the only documents to which he was able to gain access; this

deficiency, however, affected only those portions of his subject which might be regarded as offering least either of amusement or instruction, and he still flattered himself that he should find sufficient encouragement to carry down his design through periods of increasing light and knowledge. But his plan was met on the part of the faculty, by an apathy for which he was not prepared; the topic, notwithstanding an elegant and a popular mode of treating it, as far as the biographical part was concerned, was repulsive to general readers; and after repeatedly resuming, and again laying aside this favourite task during nearly twenty succeeding years, he was compelled finally to abandon it, as one which promised no adequate remuneration either in fame or emolument. The completed volume, however, has been much prized by a select few, and the idea of continuing the work has several times been entertained by persons not sufficiently informed, perhaps, of the accumulated obstacles which overcame the resolution of the original projector.

The following account of his various pursuits, occurs in a letter to the Rev. Mr. Barbauld written in the summer of 1775:—"Many a vain wish have I formed since your last visit, that the pleasures we derived from your company might have been more durable. This desire has more parti-

cularly recurred during the solitary state of our academical secession, in which our social circle has been for the most part contracted within the narrow bounds of our two families. However, with business, books, a wife and children, I should be unreasonable to complain of *ennui;* and I have taken the most effectual method to keep it off by being pretty fully employed in my *grand scheme*, which goes on briskly and prosperously. Dr. Fothergill, who has been down here, approves it and offers me his assistance; and my more intimate friends of the faculty all encourage me to go on with spirit.

"I have lately been writing the life of a very extraordinary man, Sir Thomas Browne, the famous Norwich physician, and author of *Religio Medici*. Did you ever read this singular book? If not, I desire you and my sister would immediately do it and give me your opinions concerning it. It has all the spirit and eccentricity of uncommon genius."

In September 1776 he thus records the progress of his plans:—"I have a terrible heap of old books to look over, and need not want a fresh supply when they are done with; for Dr. Darwin of Litchfield has sent me word that if I will send an ass with a pair of paniers, he will load him with old books of physic, bought at two-pence a pound.

"I have just finished for our composition club, a paper of Remarks on Inconsistencies in some of Shakespeare's characters. What heresy! you will say. It is a sort of bold stroke, I must confess; but I was provoked past endurance at finding some of the Scotch writers, Richardson in particular, quoting Shakespeare for any fact in the history of the human mind like gospel; and philosophizing away upon any sentiment of this poor player's as if he had all the schools of all the philosophers, ancient and modern, in his head. Shakespeare is a poet,—let him not be degraded into a mere moralist. I can lose myself in ecstasy in his enchanted island or forest of Arden, but I cannot allow his Richard to be a true Macchiavel, or his Hamlet a model of virtuous feeling."

The Life of Agricola had been designed by Mr. Aikin partly as a proof of his own skill as a translator, partly as a specimen of "a Warrington-printed classic," and the accuracy with which it had been executed by Mr. Eyres, encouraged him to try another experiment of the same kind. It was his fondness for natural history which on this occasion directed his choice of an author, and produced the plan thus unfolded in a letter to Mr. Barbauld.

"Did you ever read Pliny's Natural History? I have a scheme, as indeed I am never without

one, of selecting some of the more entertaining and unexceptionable parts of his account of animals, of which there is a good deal very elegant and pleasing, and making a school-book out of them. My father and several friends approve of it, if it can be made worth while. But Pliny is a difficult author, and many schoolmasters would not perhaps trust themselves with him. If this objection were obviated, to be sure the subject of the book, teaching things as well as words, and things more accommodated to the taste and capacity of boys than the general subjects of school-books, would make the publication very desirable. Pray give me your free opinion upon the matter."

The selection appeared soon after in a thin duodecimo; and Mr. Aikin thought himself fortunate in prevailing upon his learned father to contribute a short Latin preface, composed with such fullness of meaning and such an elegant purity of language, as to have called forth extraordinary commendations from a living scholar of first-rate eminence. A selection of entire pieces from Seneca, and a complete edition of the works of Statius, were afterwards printed for the use of schools by Eyres under Mr. Aikin's superintendence.

An Essay on the application of Natural History to Poetry, printed in 1777, was Mr. Aikin's next

contribution to the amusement and instruction of the public;—to please and to profit together was indeed the general aim of his writings, and the mode by which he effected this double purpose is well exemplified in the instance before us.

The sciences which he chiefly pursued,—those founded on experiment and the investigation of nature,—unlike the mathematics and the more abstruse questions of metaphysics, easily lend themselves to an alliance with polite literature; they supply rhetoric with metaphors and illustrations, and poetry with simile and description, and derive lustre in return from a moderate and judicious employment of the ornaments of cultivated diction. This he early perceived; and nothing is more observable in a large portion of his works than the blending of various branches of natural knowledge with the elegancies of literature; while the spirit of philosophical criticism presiding over the whole, deduces its principles and suggests its reflections, now from the discoveries of science and now from the creations of genius.

The Essay is dedicated to Mr. Pennant, from whose works its original idea and some of its most valuable materials are stated to be derived. It begins with taking notice of the frequent complaint of the general insipidity of modern poetry; and rejecting the discouraging theory of a general

decay of genius, finds the solution of the fact in that prevalent imitation of preceding poets which takes place, among their successors, of original observation and the exercise of invention. Novelty of subject, he pronounces to be the present requisite, and he recommends that it should be sought among "the grand and beautiful objects which nature every where profusely throws around us; and which, though the most obvious store of new materials to the poet, is that which of all others he has most sparingly touched." In illustration of the habit of successive copying which has long prevailed, he adduces several instances, from writers of high name; but speedily quitting this more beaten ground, he proceeds to offer examples of another fault, the vagueness and indistinctness, and sometimes the inconsistency and absurdity, which the neglect of the study of actual nature has introduced into poetical description. A discussion follows of the "false representations of nature which ancient error or fable first introduced, but which, having been made the foundation of ingenious figures and pleasing allusions, the poets of every age have adopted." These, not without some graceful expressions of reluctance and regret, are at length condemned; on the principle, that "nothing can be really beautiful which has not truth for its basis," and on the further consi-

derations of "the boundless variety of genuine beauties, applicable to every purpose of ornament which nature liberally scatters around us," and of "the danger of suffering falsehood and error habitually to intrude even in matters of the slightest importance." It is also well observed, that "a modern writer can lose nothing by this rigour; for since both true and false wit have been so long employed upon these topics, every thing brilliant or ingenious which they can suggest, must long since have been exhausted; and the revival of them at present is as much a proof of barren invention as of false taste."

After a few more observations on the *defects* usually discoverable in poetical compositions, which the accurate and scientific study of nature might obviate, the essayist proceeds to the more pleasing task of pointing out the *beauties* which the poet may derive from this source. He observes, that "all parts of nature do not seem equally capable of affording poetical imagery. The vegetable creation, delightful as it is to the senses, and extensive in utility, yields comparatively few materials to the poet, whose art is principally defective in representing those qualities in which *it* chiefly excels; colour, scent and taste. The mineral kingdom is still more sterile and unaccommodated to description. The ani-

mal race, who, in common with their human lord and head, have almost universally, somewhat of moral and intellectual character; whose motions, habitations and pursuits are so infinitely and curiously varied; and whose connection with man arises to a sort of companionship and mutual attachment; seem on these accounts peculiarly adapted to the purposes of poetry. Separately considered, they afford matter for pleasing and even sublime speculation; in the rural landscape they give animation to the objects around them; and viewed in comparison with human kind they suggest amusive and instructive lessons." Accordingly it is from zoology that the subjects of the remaining part of the essay are almost exclusively derived.

Two sets of examples, connected by critical and didactic observations, are here produced,—passages in various poets describing objects of natural history,—and passages in the works of naturalists and travellers capable of affording fresh topics for poetical employment. Of these it need only be here remarked, that Homer and Virgil among the ancients, and Milton, and above all Thomson, among the moderns, are the chief sources of the first class, while a pretty considerable range of writers, with Pliny and Pennant at their head, furnish contributions to the second.

The Essay as a whole is elegant and pleasing in design, and the novelty of the topic recommended it to many readers; in execution it might doubtless have been improved by the employment of more time and research in the consultation of different authors; and it is principally on account of its connection with the state of poetry and of the study of natural history at the period of its production, that this early effort deserves particular notice in the biography of its author.

The recent deaths of Goldsmith, Collins, and Gray, had nearly reduced the English muses to silence, and the pause gave full leisure to suggest new experiments, whether in the topics or in the structure of verse. The "tune" of Pope had palled upon the public ear, and of a succession of lyric poets there could be little hope, considering the extreme difficulty of this style; Thomson alone, of all the recent models, appeared likely to reward the particular study of the rising generation of poets; for, as his chief merit lay in the vigor and freshness of his painting, no one could hope to emulate his fame without studying directly from nature. But probably this very necessity, combined with a certain uncouthness in the manner of this great writer, had discouraged in a considerable degree the efforts of imitators, and no school of descriptive poets had yet been formed.

But many causes were secretly conspiring to excite that passion for natural scenery, and all the objects connected with rural life, by which Englishmen are now distinguished above the members of any other civilised community; and those who first began to cultivate an intimacy with the works of nature, soon enjoyed the satisfaction of witnessing the extensive success of their efforts for the diffusion and advancement of their favorite studies. Mr. Aikin, among others, proved a prosperous missionary in the cause; and though I would by no means affirm, that it was at his suggestion, in the essay before us, that succeeding poets began to tread in the path there indicated, it was at least a striking confirmation of the justness of his taste and judgement, to find them seeking and attaining novelty, beauty, and grandeur by following that very course. Two men of extraordinary genius, Cowper and Darwin, arose within a few years, who, with the utmost diversity in all other points, agreed however in drawing largely from the well-heads of natural history; and the anxious researches of a later school of poets seem now to have left few of its springs untasted.

Few things could have been more welcome to Mr. Aikin, while his mind was yet warm with the ideas which had produced his last piece, than the

request which he received from a London bookseller, to compose an essay on Thomson's *Seasons*, to be prefixed to an ornamented edition of the work. He flew to his task with that alacrity of spirit which is the best omen of success; and certainly not one of his critical pieces better fulfills the true purposes of these prefatory essays,—those of unfolding, in a luminous and elegant style, the plan and scope of the author,—pointing out his characteristic excellencies with just discrimination, and heightening the relish of his beauties by supplying the various accessary ideas, which suggest themselves spontaneously to the mind of the accomplished scholar alone; but which, when offered to them in a clear and popular manner, are capable of greatly enhancing the enjoyment even of common readers.

It would be superfluous to enter into further particulars respecting a piece which is included in the present volumes; but one observation seems to be required. Had Cowper's *Task* been then given to the public, a comparison of this writer and Thomson, as descriptive poets, would in all probability have formed a part of the essay on the *Seasons*. It so happens, that this very subject was many years afterwards taken up by the author, in a paper communicated to a periodical work; and that paper will here be found appended to the essay.

At the period of which we are speaking, the system of Linnæus was making rapid progress in this country; his arrangement of plants, in particular, was attentively studied and generally adopted: fresh activity was thus communicated to the pursuit of botany, which, since the death of the excellent Ray, had remained in a rather neglected condition, and several works of merit in this branch of natural history were produced. Hudson's *Flora Anglica* was first printed in 1762, and again, with great additions, in 1778; Lightfoot's *Flora Scotica* was given to the public through the generous exertions of Mr. Pennant in 1777, and Dr. Withering's *Botanical Description of British Plants* made its appearance in 1776. By some one of these publications, but most probably from the last-mentioned, Mr. Aikin was inspired with a taste for this delightful study, which his previous love and knowledge of the works of nature in other departments peculiarly fitted him to imbibe. Its effects upon his mind are thus warmly celebrated by his own pen, in one of his letters to his son.... "The study of English botany caused several summers to glide away with me in more pure and active delight than almost any other single object ever afforded me. It rendered every walk and ride interesting, and converted the plodding rounds of business into excursions of pleasure." To

which it may be added, that as he communicated a greater or less share of this taste to most of his own family, and to several of his friends, it became an additional source of social sympathy and domestic enjoyment. Independently of what he has written professedly on botanical subjects, his works are often enriched by illustrations, remarks and allusions which prove his intimate acquaintance with this branch of knowledge; and among his private papers, some interesting records exist of the characteristic manner in which he pursued it. In a calendar, beginning in the spring of 1778, and regularly carried on for six years, the names and *habitats* of all the plants which he observed are noted, with the respective periods of flowering, in the different years, of many common species, both wild and cultivated; notices of the progress of vegetation, which he seems afterwards to have employed in his little work for young people, entitled *The Calendar of Nature.* An elegant fragment of a poem in blank verse, called *The Botanic Walk*, indicates his constant endeavour to associate poetry, like a beloved mistress, with all his favorite studies; a propensity which is further attested by a very pleasing collection of passages, selected from the Latin poets, relating to forest-trees, accompanied by remarks, tending

to show the superior merit and accuracy of these writers, as observers and describers of natural objects[a].

It also appears, that he did not acquiesce without a struggle in the adoption of the *artificial* system of arrangement laid down by Linnæus. The *natural* methods of some preceding botanists possessed much superior attractions for one who was more inclined to take a large view of the vegetable economy as a whole, itself making a portion of a greater whole, than to descend to the minute details of classes and genera; and he carefully examined and analysed for his own use the classifications of Haller and Jussieu. But further experience of the great convenience of the Linnæan system to the practical botanist reconciled him to its use, without however blinding him to its defects, and his mature judgement upon it appears in the Letter to his son on *Classification in Natural History*. The following remarks, however, which he never made public, seem to possess some interest as a specimen of the manner in which his understanding exercised itself on the principles of the Swedish naturalist.

"Linnæus, in his *Philosophia Botanica*, lays

[a] This collection he afterwards formed into a set of papers which appeared in the Gentleman's Magazine in the years 1786 and 1787, and will be found in the Appendix (A).

down the following proposition: 'The *essence* of VEGETABLES consists in the FRUCTIFICATION; the *essence* of the FRUCTIFICATION, in the FLOWER and FRUIT; the *essence* of the FLOWER in the ANTHERA and STIGMA; the *essence* of the FRUIT in the SEED.'

"In the beginning of the same chapter, he defines the *fructification* to be a *temporary* part of vegetables, appropriated to generation. But how can what is *temporary* be *essential?*

"If by the *essence* of a thing be meant that which causes it to be recognised for what it is, (and we cannot, perhaps, arrive at a clearer idea of essence,) a number of parts or qualities must be taken into consideration, each of which is as essential as another; and *essence* will consist in their permanent and constant union in the same subject. Thus, for a tree to be known as an *oak*, it is as essential that it should have a particular kind of bark, manner of growth, grain of wood, shape of leaf, &c. as that it should bear acorns. Nay, the latter is in common estimation the least essential of all; since it takes place during a small portion of the year, and in many individuals does not happen at all. Linnæus himself, too, in his characters of *species* (which alone are real existences) is obliged to take in other circumstances to those of the fructification, in order to mark them out. Thus, the

Quercus Robur (Common Oak) is not only a plant with such and such parts of fructification, according to the generical description, but with *leaves* sinuated in a particular manner; otherwise, according to his system, it might be a holm-oak or a cork-tree. But a woodman will distinguish it even without leaves, by its bark and wood.

"The proposition of Linnæus is only then to be understood with regard to his own system; and not without some latitude, even of that."

The social temper of Mr. Aikin rendered him eager to communicate to others a fondness for those pursuits from which he derived his own amusement and instruction. That very eminent botanist, Mr. Markham Salisbury, then a student at Warrington academy, was primarily indebted to him for his love of the science. A very distinguished lover of nature, no less than of art and literature, Mr. Roscoe, caught from him the same taste; and the following extract from a letter to Dr. Haygarth, written after a little excursion which they had made together in Wales, proves the zeal of his friend to enlist him also in the cause:

"The remembrance of our delightful ramble has been a store of pleasure to me ever since, unalloyed by any bad consequences from it, either with respect to business or health. I never was so little fatigued with a long ride. Most of my

mountaineers survive their change of climate. Greatly do I wish that you were not only almost but altogether a botanist. We could negotiate the cleverest exchanges of plants and observations, and plan the most charming summer meetings! I will be bound to furnish your *rock* completely at once, and then let them call it a stone heap that dare. I will venture to try a botanical commission or two upon you, chiefly to oblige you to turn your attention that way.

"When you ride next over the hill above Broughton, be so good as to 'light and search for a little *Campanula*, a very small plant with a blue flower, either the *Campanula uniflora* or *hederifolia*, which I found growing plentifully there. And when you are at Ruthin, visit the castle, where, among several other uncommon plants, you will find plentifully growing out of the walls an odd-smelling aromatic plant, of the mint or basil kind, with little red flowers in whirls, which I want much, especially as I don't know what it is. The seeds will do as well or better than the roots of both these."

It is now time to advert to the other objects which about this time exercised the activity of a mind which proved its vigor by its versatility. In a letter to Mrs. Barbauld, dated in February 1777, is the following passage:—"We have a

work now in Eyres's press which will I think establish the reputation of its author as the *best man*, if not the most elegant writer, in England. It is the benevolent Mr. Howard's account of Prisons, a subject which he has for some years pursued with a spirit and assiduity that looks scarcely of a piece with any thing else to be met with in this degenerate age. Nothing but his book can give a proper idea of the dangers and fatigues he has gone through in his truly patriotic design. He has been here superintending the printing, for three or four weeks, and will stay as much longer. I have the pleasure of seeing him every day, being his corrector and reviser and so forth. It will be a large quarto, not ill-written, and though containing a good deal of dry matter, yet on the whole very interesting, if not entertaining."

Thus then was commenced an intercourse which Mr. Aikin always accounted among the most interesting and honorable circumstances of his life, as it led to his long and confidential intimacy with that truly great man, the philanthropic Howard, whom he loved and honored during his life, and whose memory he celebrated and protected after his death. Further notices of this excellent person will occur in the course of this narrative; at present we proceed with the literary journal of the immediate subject of this memoir. Mr. and Mrs. Bar-

bauld, having no child of their own, had prevailed upon Mr. and Mrs. Aikin to make over to them one of theirs as an adopted son; for this favored child Mrs. Barbauld composed her well-known "Early Lessons;" when completed, they were committed to her brother to be conducted through the press; his judgement upon their merits, long since confirmed by the public, is thus expressed:—"The little book you have sent for Charles is what a person of real genius alone could have written; and so far from degrading Mr. Eyres's press, I sincerely believe it has never been employed about so really useful a work, all its metaphysics, divinity, philosophy, and even poetry not excepted." "I never," he adds, "knew my time more fully taken up than at present, so various are my occupations of reading, writing, lecturing, curing, &c. &c. Thomson has not yet got into the press, nor have I near finished my essay. It is a most laborious piece of composition; vastly more than I expected. I shall not set about it in good earnest till I am reminded by the little black gentleman of the press with the usual cry of 'Sir, we want copy.'

"You once asked me, in relation to my extracts from Pliny; 'If these are your true stories, where are your lies?' This I mean to show you, being now engaged in a fair translation of the zoological

books of his Natural History, to which Mr. Pennant is to contribute notes. What think you of the venom of the basilisk being so potent, that when one of them is killed by a man on horseback, the poison ascends through the spear, and kills not only the man but his horse too? To tell the truth, I am almost ashamed to set my name to some of his old wives' tales. But 'tis Latin, so it may pass."

This translation, however, was not completed; in a following letter, he thus refers to it:—"A pretty scheme enough in idea, but on actually going straight forwards with my author, I am almost disgusted by his errors and old women's fables. Surely the world is full enough of falsehood and nonsense without adding such stuff to the mass. Moreover, I find on examination that Pliny has copied almost all his truths from Aristotle, and was no observer himself. So I believe if I can get off handsomely I shall drop the scheme, though I have done something considerable in it."

The "lecturing" mentioned in the list of his engagements was the delivery of a course of chemistry to the students of the Warrington academy. The subject at this period occupied much of his attention; he made many experiments, in conjunction with one of the elder students, whom he had inspired with equal or superior ardor in the

same pursuit; and he undertook a translation of Baumé's *Manuel de Chymie*, published in 1778. Four years afterwards, he printed *Heads of Chemistry* for the use of his class. For the use of another class, to whom he then gave lectures in anatomy, he likewise printed *A Sketch of the Animal Economy*, and afterwards a Latin translation of it with additions.

Educated in that strong attachment to the House of Hanover which was peculiarly characteristic of the Protestant dissenters during the reigns of the two first Georges, Mr. Aikin had continued up to this period of his life, an ardent rather than discriminating lover of his country and admirer of the British Constitution; a patriot of that class who, while participating with the warmest filial interest in all the fortunes of their country, find themselves little disposed to exercise a critical judgement upon the wisdom or rectitude of those counsels by which her affairs are conducted. The glories of the war commenced in 1756 had warmed his imagination as a child; and it seems never to have occurred to him to ask himself whether, amid so much to flatter national vanity, any tendencies might be discerned, in the policy pursued by the Government, dangerous to public liberty and the common good. In the beginning of that memorable contest which termi-

nated in the independence of the North American colonies, the ingratitude and undutifulness of these metaphorical children towards a parent who had nourished and protected them in infancy, had strongly affected his feelings, in common with those of the great mass of the English people, and during the first years of war, no one was a more firm upholder of the justice of that measure. But the further progress of events, and the free discussions of fundamental principles which it called forth, produced a gradual but complete and permanent revolution in his opinions on these subjects. The change is dated by a letter to his sister as having taken place in the year 1778.

From this period he became a strenuous supporter of the cause of civil liberty, in whatever quarter of the world her banner was displayed; to that cause he often devoted the service of his pen, and sacrificed in many important circumstances his worldly interests; it was an attachment, in fact, which might truly be said to have given its color to the whole of his remaining life, and it is therefore important to have marked exactly the time and manner of its commencement[a].

Of his literary occupations in the year 1779 he

[a] See a Letter on the Attachment to Country in Dr. Aikin's Letters to his Son, vol. i.

gives the following details:—"I have got some of the books I wanted for the Medical Biography, and so am pushing on to the end of the first volume, which will come out this winter. Another piece of business just coming upon me is the revisal of Mr. Howard's Appendix to his Book on Prisons,—the fruit of another very extensive foreign tour which this good, this glorious man has taken in pursuit of his very humane and important object. He is just now arrived here, and will be in Warrington during the whole printing of his work, which, as there is to be a second edition of the whole too, will be several weeks. You will perhaps have seen in the papers his appointment to the office of one of the supervisors of the Penitentiary Houses for Criminals to be erected by act of parliament. This is a very happy appointment for the public: for himself, he has refused any salary or gratuity for his trouble, as likewise have his two colleagues.

His close connection with the Warrington academy at this period, rendered its affairs highly interesting to him; and in the summer of 1779 an addition was made to the number of tutors, which proved one of its most valuable accessions. The Rev. Dr. Aikin,—that title he had lately acquired by diploma from the Scotch university at which he had studied,—had sustained for several years

the double office of tutor in divinity and in classics; —but increasing infirmities now compelled him to discontinue his lectures in the latter branch, and the trustees of the institution were reluctantly compelled to seek for a successor. The place of Dr. Aikin could not, it was found, be adequately supplied in the class of dissenting ministers, who were usually much better versed in studies strictly professional than in the literature of ancient Greece and Rome. In this dilemma it fortunately occurred to Dr. Priestley, as Mr. Aikin writes to his sister, "to make inquiries in a new tract,—among the clergy who were dissatisfied with the church, and would not disdain an alliance with dissenters. Dr. Jebb strongly recommended a Mr. Wakefield, now officiating at Liverpool as a curate; and on further inquiry he had the amplest testimonials for extensive learning, candor and morals. On mentioning the thing to him, he seemed pleased with the proposal, and the trustees on their part unanimously concurred in wishing him to come." "We like him much," adds Mr. Aikin, "on sight and conversation, and there is every reason at present to hope that he will prove a valuable acquisition to the academy and to our circle. My father has conceived a very high opinion of him." Thus auspiciously commenced the connection of that virtuous man and accomplished scholar the

late Gilbert Wakefield, with Warrington and with a family since bound to his by closer and by dearer ties.

The sentiments of reciprocal esteem and affection excited in the bosom of Mr. Wakefield towards his new associates will best be collected from the following passage of his interesting and ingenuous Memoirs of his own life. "I reflect to this day with a pensive pleasure saddened by regret on the delightful converse,

'That feast of reason and that flow of soul,'

which I enjoyed with my colleagues; especially at a weekly meeting holden alternately at the house of each other, and rendered still more agreeable by the occasional accession of some congenial spirit, resident on the spot, or casually introduced as a visitor:

Tecum etenim longos memini consumere soles—
While summer suns roll unperceived away."

He adds, "We once made an attempt to form another society at Warrington merely literary, consisting of Dr. Enfield, the present Dr. Aikin and myself, and an assortment of the superior students: at which every member was to produce in his turn some composition in prose or verse, upon a subject of criticism, philosophy, or taste. I never relished this sort of meeting, in which set speeches

were expected; but was happy enough when conversation glided, by a natural and unprepared course, into a literary channel. We soon gave it up."

Not long was this delightful society permitted to remain entire. The constitutional maladies of the Rev. Dr. Aikin continued to gain ground upon his feeble frame; and scrupulously apprehensive of retaining the office of instruction under any diminution of the powers of active exertion, he in the summer of the year 1780 gave in his resignation of the tutorship in divinity, which he had hitherto retained. The Rev. Dr. Clayton of Liverpool was appointed to succeed him; but not being prepared immediately to commence his course, Dr. Aikin had agreed to go on to the end of the academical sessions. But this undertaking it was not permitted to him to complete;—an acute attack of a single day and night was sufficient to exhaust his small remains of strength, and terminated his career on December 14, 1780. The feelings of one of the most dutiful and affectionate of sons on this trying occasion, may best be collected from his own expressions on announcing the sad and sudden event to his beloved sister.

"That one of the best men in the world has been thus easily removed from a state of pain and infirmity, his usefulness and even his enjoyments

failing till the last day of his life, his breast ene, his prospects bright—can certainly, on his n account, be in no respect a subject of grieving. it we—my dear sister—what have not we lost! ne best parent, the wisest counsellor, the most fectionate friend, every thing that could com- nand love and veneration, united in him we pos- sessed,—and him we have lost. Our consolation must be in a grateful sense of the blessings we have left, which are numerous enough to demand our warm and cheerful acknowledgments."

In a second letter, giving an account of the funeral, these reflections are added. "Thus the painful scenes have been gone through by us; and I trust will soon leave little more than a tender regret for our loss, rendered not unpleasing by the reflection of the hopes to which our deceased parent succeeds, together with the universal esteem and affection he has left imprinted on the minds of all who knew him."

The following short, but expressive tribute to the character of this revered parent also occurs in Dr. Aikin's Letters from a Father to his Son:—

"From every thing I have seen of the world, I am convinced that more is to be done towards obtaining happiness in general, and its precious ingredient, freedom of action, in particular, by con tracting the bounds of our wishes, than by the

utmost extension of our powers in filling a plan of unlimited enjoyment. This, I believe, is not fashionable doctrine, but it is that which the experience of my own heart suggests. It would too, I am sure, have been supported by the suffrage of your grandfather, whose memory I know you so justly revere. Though by no means what would be called a high-spirited man, he preserved during life an honourable independence, by the simple method of making nothing essential to his happiness which did not come within the reach of his useful and low-priced services. I wish you better health, stronger spirits, and perhaps more encouragement from the world than he had;—more knowledge, superior talents, higher worth, and a more truly philosophical temper, I need not wish you, though paternal affection is little inclined to be a niggard in its wishes[a]."

A more elaborate, and I believe a very resembling portrait of this admirable person is found in Mr. Wakefield's Memoirs, where he describes the characters of his Warrington colleagues; and the insertion of it in this work will not be regarded as a digression by the reader who duly estimates the weight of parental instructions and example in the formation of character.

[a] Letter on Independence.

"Our Divinity-tutor, Dr. Aikin, was a gentleman whose endowments as a man and as a scholar, according to my sincere judgment of him, it is not easy to exaggerate by panegyric. In his life he was rigorously virtuous, and, when I knew him, under as perfect a self-government, as a participation of human weaknesses can well allow. He has acknowledged to me his irascible propensities in early life, and the difficulties which he had encountered in the discipline of his temper. *Religion* had brought every wayward idea and irregular passion into subjection to the laws of reason, and had erected her trophy in the citadel of his *mind*. The high esteem and even veneration in which I held him, received some abatement, I must candidly acknowledge, several years after his decease, on hearing from a friend at Nottingham, of unquestionable veracity, who had formerly been his scholar at Kibworth in Leicestershire, some mortifying instances of severity in the castigation of his pupils. And should a historian, faithful to his trust, suppress the relation of this blemish, compensated by such various and exalted excellencies?

velut si
Egregio inspersos reprêndas corpore nævos [a].

[a] Let me be permitted however, in opposition to the report of the "Nottingham friend," whom my father said he well remembered as

"As his whole conduct was strictly moral, so the influences of religion upon his mind were permanent and awful. He was benevolent and candid in all his judgments upon the character of others: of great hospitality, as I myself experienced: quick to discern, and ready to acknowledge, true merit wherever it resided: not tenacious of his own opinions, but patiently attentive, beyond almost any man I ever knew, to the reasonings of an opponent: perfectly open to conviction: of an amiability, softened by a modest opinion of himself, that endeared him to all: and a politeness of demeanour seldom found even in an elevated station. His intellectual attainments were of a very superior quality indeed. His acquaintance with all the *evidences* of revelation, with *morals*, *politics and metaphysics*, was most accurate and extensive. Every path of polite literature had been traversed by him, and traversed with success. He under-

the most unpromising and disobedient boy in the whole school,—to relate the following incident, which I never recall without deep emotion:—About eleven years ago, being on a visit at the house of a particular friend at York, I met with a gentleman who, on learning of what family I was, begged to introduce himself to me as Mr. John Coltman of Leicester, and thus addressed me: "My father was a scholar of your grandfather at Kibworth; and acquired from him that love of reading which was ever after his delight and solace. To the end of his life, and I had only last year the misfortune of losing him, he never named your grandfather but with eyes swimming in tears."

stood the Hebrew and French languages to perfection; and had an intimacy with the best authors of Greece and Rome, superior to what I have ever known in any dissenting minister from my own experience. His taste for composition was correct and elegant: and his repetition of beautiful passages, though accompanied with a theatrical stateliness and pomp, highly animated and expressive of sensibility."

After the publication of his volume of Medical Biography in 1780, Mr. Aikin laid aside this work, and no other of any considerable magnitude occupied his attention for some years. In fact, his necessary engagements were now too numerous to admit of his devoting a very considerable portion of his time to literary composition. His practice, especially in the most fatiguing branch of his profession, was extensive, and he had undertaken the charge of two medical pupils. One of these was a son of Mr. White of Manchester, who remained with him only a few months, being designed for a physician; the other was Mr. P. Holland, now a surgeon of eminence settled at Knutsford in Cheshire. This gentleman remained with him two years; and never, it may safely be affirmed, was a similar connexion productive of a higher degree of mutual satisfaction. Treated in all respects like a member of the family, the pupil

learned to feel as one; and neither absence nor length of time, ever obliterated, or impaired, either his sense of grateful attachment to the friend and instructor of his youth, or the affection and esteem of that friend for one so highly deserving of both these sentiments.

Among the lighter studies which amused this period of vacation from the cares of authorship was the composition of some small pieces of verse, one of which, *Horatian Philosophy*, he mentions, on sending it to his sister, as extracted from various passages of that favorite writer. As a happy specimen both of his powers in familiar verse, and of the strain of sentiment in the ancient poet which he found peculiarly accordant with his own disposition, the lines may here find a place.

HORATIAN PHILOSOPHY.

"From scenes of tumult, noise and strife,
And all the ills of public life,
From waiting at the great man's gate,
Amid the slaves that swell his state;
From coxcomb poets and their verses;
From streets with chariots throng'd, and hearses:
From rattling spendthrifts and their guests,
And dull buffoons with scurvy jests;
From fashion's whims and folly's freaks;
From shouts by day and nightly shrieks;—
O let me make a quick retreat,
And seek in haste my country seat;

In silent shades forgotten lie,
And learn to live before I die!
There, on the verdant turf reclined,
By wisdom's rules compose my mind;
My passions still, correct my heart,
And meliorate my better part:
Quit idle hope and fond desire,
And cease to gaze where fools admire:
With scorn the crowd profane behold
Enslaved by sordid thirst of gold,
Nor deign to bend at such a shrine
While priest of Phœbus and the Nine.
Nor would I shun the student's toil,
But feed my lamp with Grecian oil;
Sometimes through Stoic walks sublime
Up the rough steep of virtue climb;
From philosophic heights look down,
Nor heed if Fortune smile or frown;
In Wisdom's mantle closely furl'd,
Defy the tempests of the world;
And scorning all that's *not our own*,
Place every good in mind alone.
Then, sliding to an easier plan,
Put off the God to be the man;
Resolve the offer'd sweets to prove
Of social bowls, gay sports and love;
Give froward life its childish toy,
Nor blush to feel, and to enjoy.
Yet ever, as by humour led,
Each path of life in turn I tread,
Still to my first great maxim true,
On Moderation fix my view;
Let her with tempering sway preside
O'er Pleasure's cup and Learning's pride;
And by her sage decrees o'er-rule
The maxims of each sturdy school.

Opinion thus may various play,
While Reason shines with steady ray,
And casts o'er all the shifting scene
Her sober hue, and light serene."

A long vacation from the cares of authorship was, however, in reality, neither the wish nor the fate of Mr. Aikin; and he embraced with satisfaction a proposal made to him by the proprietors of *Lewis's Experimental History of the Materia Medica* for a much enlarged and corrected edition of that work. During a considerable part of the year 1783, he was closely occupied by this design, and the result of his labors appeared in the subsequent year in a quarto volume. The execution of a task for which he was well prepared by his previous study of chemistry and botany, was much approved by the faculty; and the work was reprinted with further enlargement and emendations, by the same hand, a few years afterwards.

The ages of his own elder children at this period, rendered education a subject of lively and augmenting interest to the mind of Mr. Aikin; and several designs were conceived by him for the entertainment and instruction of his own boys, which afterwards appeared matured and expanded in his various works for young people. A slight but spirited sketch of his leading opinions

on this important topic is found in the following remarks, addressed to his sister, respecting a work which at that time greatly excited the public attention, and which he always mentioned with respect, and often quoted with applause for its many judicious remarks on particular points, notwithstanding the objections to its general system here stated.

"I have a hundred things to say both for and against Knox. I wish from my heart that you, with Mr. Barbauld's assistance, would write a criticism on him. His great fault, I think, is setting out with too confined a view of the ends of education, which must be as various as situations and characters in life are. Does he not breed them all for clergymen and schoolmasters? I should like a good comment on that excellent saying of Agesilaus, 'that the great business of education should be to instruct youth in what will be of use to them when they come to be men.' This plan will scarcely include Latin verses and the study of Greek dialects."

To teach *things* rather than *words*, will readily be understood to have been the aim of the author of the preceding remarks; and the first of his publications for the benefit of the juvenile part of the community, was intended to communicate a taste for such knowledge as he held useful to all.

This little book, printed in 1784, was entitled The Calendar of Nature,—an elegant and instructive sketch of the most striking circumstances in animal and vegetable life, and the principal changes in the general face of nature attendant upon the revolution of the seasons in our latitudes. According to the manner of the writer, poetical mottoes were affixed to each month; while apt quotations in verse liberally interspersed, served to promote in the mind of the youthful reader that alliance between *poetry* and *natural history* which he had ever so warmly at heart. The piece was well received, and went through more than one impression[a].

About the end of 1783, the dissolution of the Warrington academy scattered the little knot of literary friends, whose congenial society had hitherto so happily disguised from one another the irksomeness and monotony of a contracted circle of acquaintance and an obscure scene of action. Mr. Aikin deeply felt the privation; but to check repining at inevitable evil was ever, in his estimation, the first rule of moral wisdom; and he applied himself to seeking, in the diligent exercise of his own powers, the best substitute

[a] An enlargement of this work, adapted to readers of a riper age, and entitled The Natural History of the Year, was published by Arthur Aikin for Johnson, in 1799.

for the animating intercourse of mind with mind. With Dr. Enfield, who alone of the former tutors remained on the spot, he occupied himself in the discussion of a variety of literary schemes, of which, though a considerable portion might prove abortive, several attained, sooner or later, a healthy maturity. One of his most elaborate critical pieces was begun at this period, the design of which he thus unfolded to his sister:

"I have another project in hand, which I want a hundred times to talk with you upon. I am writing an Essay on the allegorical personages introduced into poetry, such as Fame, Death, Despair, Fear, &c., and I have already made a pretty large collection of them. I reduce them to three classes: 1. Such personifications as only represent a human figure strongly impressed with a particular passion or quality; such as *Sleep* in Ovid, *Affectation* and *Ill-nature* in the Rape of the Lock. 2. Such as to this have some symbolical or emblematical addition; as *Envy* in Ovid, *Care* in Spenser. 3. Such as are entirely emblematical; as *Love*, *Death*, *Time*, *Fame*, as usually described. My plan is to collect a number of examples under each of these heads, to make some observations on each, and to establish some general rules for this part of poetry from the whole. My present sources are chiefly English

poetry, especially Spenser. I suppose the Italian writers would afford a good deal, but they are locked up from me. I must see, however, Hoole's Ariosto. Will you bestow a little thought on this matter, and give me your opinion? I assure you it is a very entertaining speculation, and will afford many fine quotations."

I know not how far he proceeded with his plan at this period; but it was not till many years afterwards, and when the treasures of Italian literature were no longer "locked up" from him, that he presented his Essay on Poetical Personification to the public[a]. If in the present anarchical state of English poetry any partisans of *ancient rule* may be supposed to still exist, who believe the power of composing "immortal verse" to be an *art* as well as a *gift*,—who hold that the energies of genius are not checked, but invigorated, by the habit of obedience to the strict discipline of taste and judgement,—to them this piece will appear a valuable addition to the *school books* of every rising poet and every cultivated reader. It teaches the correct and consistent use of one of the most splendid ornaments of the more elevated species of poetry; and this, not by frigid precepts, but by examples drawn from the works

[a] It was first printed in the Monthly Magazine, and afterwards in his Essays, Literary and Miscellaneous. Johnson & Co. 1811.

of the greatest masters, and appreciated with sensibility as well as discernment.

The task of preparing a new edition of Mr. Howard's work on Prisons, with large additions, the fruit of another and very extensive tour undertaken by this eminent philanthropist, now procured Mr. Aikin the pleasure of his daily society during several months, and the satisfaction of exercising his literary skill in favor of his important and beneficent objects. Of the work in question he thus writes to his sister: "Mr. Howard is here printing his book, and will stay three or four months. His labors are most amazing, and a wonderful proof of what may be done by one man entirely devoted to a single object. Yet he has not, I think, a very enlarged mind, and will be chiefly useful as a collector of facts for others to reason upon. His narrow education (as he himself often laments) is an eternal and insuperable bar to him. In resolution, firmness, and integrity, he is unequalled."

But neither the dictates of that philosophic *moderation* which he cultivated, nor the pursuit of useful knowledge and of those amenities of literature which he loved, could longer disguise from a man of talents and activity, and the father of a growing family, the indisputable fact that he had not yet risen to his just level in society;—

poetry, especially Spenser. I suppose the Italian writers would afford a good deal, but they are locked up from me. I must see, however, Hoole's Ariosto. Will you bestow a little thought on this matter, and give me your opinion? I assure you it is a very entertaining speculation, and will afford many fine quotations."

I know not how far he proceeded with his plan at this period; but it was not till many years afterwards, and when the treasures of Italian literature were no longer "locked up" from him, that he presented his Essay on Poetical Personification to the public[a]. If in the present anarchical state of English poetry any partisans of *ancient rule* may be supposed to still exist, who believe the power of composing "immortal verse" to be an *art* as well as a *gift*,—who hold that the energies of genius are not checked, but invigorated, by the habit of obedience to the strict discipline of taste and judgement,—to them this piece will appear a valuable addition to the *school books* of every rising poet and every cultivated reader. It teaches the correct and consistent use of one of the most splendid ornaments of the more elevated species of poetry; and this, not by frigid precepts, but by examples drawn from the works

[a] It was first printed in the Monthly Magazine, and afterwards in his Essays, Literary and Miscellaneous. Johnson & Co. 1811.

the truly respectable university of Leyden as the place of his intended graduation.

It was in the beginning of July 1784 that he set out for London on his way to Holland, furnished with a thesis, to the composition of which he had given much study[a]. Here he was joined by a near connection, who wished to make this little trip in his company, and they pursued their journey without loss of time. A short journal which he kept on his tour, though written only for his own satisfaction and the amusement of his family, appears so characteristic of his quick observation and various knowledge, that no apology, it is presumed, will be necessary for its insertion in this place.

"On July 6th, 1784, I left London about four in the afternoon in a post chaise, accompanied by Mr. K. The road for some miles through Bow and Stratford appeared like a continued town; from thence a flat unanimated country reaches to *Rumford*. After this, the country begins to be more varied and pleasant, with many gentlemen's seats, and neat cheerful farm-houses, mostly plastered over. We drove without stopping through *Chelmsford*, and only noticed the magnificent front of the new county gaol. Near this town

[a] Its title was *De Lactis Secretione in Puerperis.*

are some hop gardens, which looked very agreeably. At half past nine we reached our inn at *Witham*. For the last five or six miles, it was too dusky for prospect.

"July 7th. We left Witham at six, travelling through a flat corn country, bare of people, and affording few objects, to *Colchester*. This is a pretty large well-built old town, very quiet, and abounding with remains of antiquity. We viewed the castle, a large strong square fortress, entire on the outside. It brought to my mind the famous siege of Colchester in the civil wars, when Goring and Lucas made such a gallant defence.

From hence we proceeded through a similar but rougher country to *Manningtree*, where we came at once in sight of the estuary which separates Essex from Suffolk. At low water there is but a narrow channel, with large marshes on each side, smelling disagreeably, and looking like the native soil of agues and fevers.

"A pleasant varied country leads from hence to *Harwich*, which we reached at noon, a small neat port town, very pleasantly situated on an extremity of land opposite the German Ocean. Here we passed the time by strolling about the town and along the beach, picking up sea plants and shells, and looking at the fishing vessels running in and out. The weather was perfectly fine, and

all objects gay and pleasant. After a tedious waiting for the mail, we hurried on board the packet near eight o'clock.

"We fell down the river with the tide, and sailed close under *Landguard-fort*, a large handsome fortress on a low point of land, which commands the entrance. On clearing the harbour, we found a brisk but contrary wind. The evening was fine and warm, with frequent lightning in the horizon, and the moon silvering the waves. Not being able to advance, we cast anchor, when the vessel heaved and rolled considerably.

"July 8th. At three in the morning I came on deck, and saw the sun rising like a vast ball of fire out of the ocean. The vessel was under sail again, with frequent tacks and little advance. Contrary winds and calms prevailed all that day and the following night.

"July 9th. The wind freshened and became fairer. The vessel went steadier, and all the passengers ate a tolerable breakfast, and came on deck again. In the afternoon land was descried, and all sickness and low spirits vanished. We ran in with a fair gale, and were much amused at the various objects on shore becoming more and more distinct, and opening one after another. We sailed close along the shore of the isle of

Goeree, and at five in the evening landed at *Helvoetsluys*.

"We were extremely struck with the Dutch neatness apparent in the pavement and whole outsides of the houses in this little town. After a dish of tea in our inn, we waited on Mynheer Commissary, a brisk chattering fellow, who made us drink a bottle of bad claret with him (not without paying, however,) while he sent for carriages. We two, with a French and Dutch gentleman, got an old fashioned clumsy coach for ourselves, and a waggon for our baggage, and proceeded for the Brill.

"Our road led through low marshy land, which in most other countries would have been quite neglected, but here was highly cultivated, producing corn, flax, madder, potatoes, &c. The farm-houses were neat and substantial. There were many aquatic birds in the fields, very tame; among which we were particularly struck with the stork. At half past eight we arrived at the *Brill*, the gates of which were shut, so that we were obliged to give in our names and pay a trifle for admission. We crossed a fine double bridge at the entrance.

"July 10th. I rose at six, impatient to view the new world I was got into. On going out, I found

all the servant girls busy in mopping and scrubbing before their doors. They were drest in round caps coming low on the forehead, ear-rings, short jackets, a sort of bell-hoops, and slippers. Most had a large black patch on one or both temples, which we were told was a remedy for the tooth-ache. The morning was mistling, which did not prevent me from walking through some of the streets under the continued rows of trees. After breakfast it cleared up, and we walked to the side of the Maes, where we were ferried over to a low island, which lies in the middle of the river. Here we got a waggon for ourselves and baggage. It had swinging seats at the fore part on which we were placed, and our baggage was piled behind; and we drove away very merrily about three miles, when we had crossed the island, and came to another ferry. This landed us on the continent at *Maeslandsluys*, which is a busy populous town, with a small port full of vessels. Upon the quay were great quantities of fine salt fish in barrels. It was market day, and the shops and stalls were dressed out in all the pride of Dutch brilliancy and finery. We just walked through the town, and embarked in a *treck-schuyt* on the great Delft canal. The weather was clear and hot. We rode on the roof of the boat, and with great pleasure viewed all the

surrounding objects. Many towns and villages were in sight on both sides; and we passed through rich meadows full of cattle. The canal is very broad and straight, but we met with few vessels. About two we arrived at

"*Delft.* This is a very pleasing town, with canals and rows of trees in most of the streets, and many very good houses. The square with the town house on one side, and the new church on the other, has an air of magnificence. In two of the churches we viewed the tombs of some of the greatest men in modern history. These were Admirals Tromp and Peter Hein, Grotius, and William I. Prince of Orange. The noble mausoleum erected for the Orange family, with the statue of William, the great assertor of liberty, excited in me sentiments of the profoundest veneration.

"The Dutch churches which I saw are large lofty buildings, with no other ornaments than a number of scutcheons painted with the arms of families buried there, and hung upon the pillars. There are no pews, but a vast number of chairs and benches.

"Here we parted with our two companions, and set off after four in the Hague boat. The voyage was most amusing and striking, the banks of the canal being one continued range of villas, gar-

dens, pleasure-houses, windmills, rows of trees, &c. Numerous vessels were continually passing and repassing. In a short time we reached the *Hague*. Here we took up our quarters at the *Maréchal de Turenne*, a French hotel, very elegant and spacious. After tea we made a tour of the best part of the town under the conduct of a French *valet de place*.

"The union of the Dutch neatness with the magnificence of a court, in this place, is extremely striking. It is an assemblage of fine streets and squares, with houses worthy of the title of palaces, in a variety of beautiful architecture, exceeding much, as I thought, the best parts of London. Some of the older squares in London, as Grosvenor, Hanover, &c., if they were thrown into a continued group, with their connecting streets, would give the best idea of it. But more of the buildings are of stone, and in a grander style; and the fine rows of trees are a great ornament to them. The side pavement, however, is neither so commodious nor beautiful as in London.

"There seemed to be little hurry and bustle in the streets, and few marks of opulence and gaiety: but many families were gone to their country habitations. The few carriages we saw were mostly in the old heavy style, here and in

other parts of Holland. Some light English carriages, indeed, were now and then to be seen.

"After supper I found by great accident that my old friend the Rev. Mr. A. was in the house. We joined company with him and his friend Mr. H., and spent a most agreeable evening.

"July 11th. (Sunday.) Mr. H., A., and myself, walked before breakfast to *Scheveling*. The road is a perfectly straight avenue of several rows of trees for a mile and half,—striking but rather tiresome. Scheveling is a large fishing village, on the open beach. Its neatness could not prevent it from smelling abominably of fish. The shore is composed of whole and broken shells, protected by a range of sand hills, held together by the star-grass. An uniform line of sixty fishing barks, all nearly alike and placed at equal distances, lay before the place. On our return, we met with several open carriages full of men and women going for a Sunday's ramble, some singing and noisy, unlike our idea of Dutch gravity.

"After breakfast we walked to the parade, where some horse and foot guards were marching round and round to fine music. The Prince of Orange was here, holding a kind of levee. He is a heavy-looking ill-made man; but seemed affable and good-tempered. We followed him on his walk

to the *House in the Wood,* about a mile from the town; and were diverted with the odd motley group which composed his *suite.* There were three or four officers, a running footman, about half a dozen low people who followed close at his heels, among whom was one sedately smoking his pipe, and perfuming the whole company; a shabby fellow followed, whistling in imitation of a nightingale; and we four composed the rear. The prince walked in his boots, bareheaded; and occasionally stopped by the way to converse with some ladies whom he met. The road is a tolerably pleasant walk through a wood.

"Mr. K. and I went into the *House in the Wood,* which is a very neat building, about the size of the Queen's palace in St. James's park. Some handsome apartments were shown to us; and one very fine one, the ball room, decorated with fine paintings, mostly relating to the actions of Frederick Henry of Orange.

"We dined in our inn at the ordinary, with several officers and other gentlemen. All spoke French, but too rapidly for me to understand much. In the dining-room was a picture of our late Duke of Cumberland, who resided some time at this hotel.

"At half after four we set off in the boat for Leyden. The canal for about three miles is bordered

with a continued range of sumptuous pleasure-houses and gardens, in the height of the Dutch taste, with tall cut hedges, long vistos, berceau walks, statues, aviaries, and parterres. The summer-houses were full of people drinking tea and smoking. At a village where we changed boats, a kind of fair was held, with various sorts of diversions, very different from a Sunday's scene with us. Nearer Leyden the canal becomes very broad, with fine extensive meadows on each side. Numerous small painted summer houses and gardens announced the vicinity of *Leyden*, where we arrived at half-past seven. Here we rejoined Messrs. H. and A., and walked about the town till dark. We supped together, in I know not what fashion, upon two hot joints of meat.

"July 12th. After breakfast we all sallied forth, and I called at several places to make myself known, in doing which I was obliged to make all possible use of my broken French. My recommendatory letters were of little service, the principal person to whom they were addressed being dead; but the books I took with me served as an introduction. Mr. H. and Mr. A. left us in the forenoon. After dinner I waited by appointment on the Dean of the Faculty, Professor Sandifort, and underwent an easy colloquial examination in Latin. The subjects were chiefly

anatomical. I understood the professor's Dutch pronunciation better than I expected, and made a shift to answer him tolerably.

"We saw the *Burgh*, a curious artificial mount in the midst of the city, with a sort of fortification at top; and the *Stadt-house*, a fine old building, in which are some paintings of Lucas Van Leyden. A remarkable one of the last judgement, rather comic than terrible, and a striking representation of the raising of the memorable siege of Leyden, attracted our principal notice.

"As every Dutch town is clean, the great neatness of Leyden ceased to be so striking; but we were really struck on passing through several populous streets inhabited by weavers, which were as clean as the best parts of the city.

"July 13th. At twelve I went to the College, where I was to be examined before the Dean and Faculty of Medicine. The whole Faculty was represented by Professor Oosterdyk. He was the examiner this day. His questions chiefly related to the diagnostics and cure of diseases. They were fair and candid, and the business was got through with ease. I had two aphorisms of Hippocrates given me to comment upon against the next day, which made me as busy in the evening as a school-boy with his task. I also went over all my thesis with a Latin schoolmaster, who

seemed a clever man, and had nothing pedantic in his appearance.

"We walked about various other parts of the town, and particularly through more streets of manufacturers, not *quite* so clean as before represented, but all wonderfully quiet and orderly. Very few children are to be seen in the streets; and the lively mischievous character of a *boy*, as it appears in England and other places, seems not to exist here. Contrary to what I had expected, we found the Dutch to be a very civil and polite people. Even the lower sort frequently pull off their hats to one another in the streets, and make way for each other in passing.

"July 14th. At noon I read over my commentary on the Aphorisms before the same professors. Dr. Sandifort oppugned a little in the logical forms, but the business was soon over. We saw the botanical garden, and a collection of natural history belonging to the College; but neither of them struck me much.

"We strolled a good deal about the town this day, and almost finished our survey of it. Leyden is a large, handsome, and well-built city, with many very good houses, but few buildings that can be called grand or magnificent. It is remarkably still and quiet, and seems on the decline, many houses in all the streets being to be

let or sold. At the same time, there is nothing ruinous or shabby. Even the pleasure-houses in the gardens are all kept in perfect repair.

"The sober uniformity of the Dutch now begins to grow tiresome. There is nothing gay or joyous; no amusements of a lively cast. After business is over, the grave burgher goes to his garden without the walls, and smokes his pipe in a summer-house.

"We drank tea with a grave young physician, who showed us his large collection of diseased bones.

"July 15th. In the morning I sent my thesis to the press; and afterwards viewed the anatomical theatre and preparations. After dinner I got the first proof sheet; and having corrected it, and left proper directions about the remainder, we set off at four in the Haarlem boat. We sailed along a broad very straight canal, through fine meadows with many plantations of trees, but few people. The sand-hills on the sea-shore were in view on the left during most of the voyage. We were struck with the civility of the passengers in boats, who generally saluted each other on meeting. The masters of the treck-schuyts are commonly decent substantial men who converse familiarly with their passengers.

"At eight we reached *Haarlem*. We walked

about till dark, and then returned to supper at the ordinary, where the company all spoke Dutch. The landlady, however, who was at the table, spoke French very well.

"July 16th. We were abroad in good time to view the town. The cathedral is an extremely large old building, and is well situated in a handsome opening. We *saw*, but did not *hear*, the famous organ, which reaches from the floor of the church to the roof. In the old part of Haarlem the streets are narrow; and the rows of trees are planted so near the houses, that they look like a fan before a lady's face at church. The new town has some handsome streets, one in particular which we admired greatly. A fine broad canal runs in the midst, with handsome bridges; and on each side is a broad pavement, with rows of lofty trees, and some very noble houses, the inhabitants of which, we were told, are chiefly Anabaptists. Our guide also took us to the *wood*, adjoining and belonging to the city, of which the people are very proud. It is cut into stars, avenues, &c. and neatly kept; but the trees are contemptible. About it are many elegant pleasure houses, some belonging to the Amsterdam merchants. The famous florists' gardens, too, are hereabouts; and we saw vast numbers of bulbous roots drying upon frames.

At eleven we embarked in the boat for Amsterdam. The canal is extremely straight and handsome. Half-way we got out of our boat, and walked across a narrow neck of land, between the Haarlem-meer on the one hand, and the Y, an arm of the Zuyder-zee on the other. The prospect is very fine; and we could clearly distinguish Saardam in North Holland, with its windmills, as numerous as houses in many towns.

"The approach to Amsterdam is less striking than to several other Dutch towns, few great objects presenting themselves to the eye. We saw near us to the left, for some miles, the great dykes or banks to keep out the sea; over the tops of which the masts and sails of vessels appeared. After one we arrived at

"*Amsterdam.* We walked above a mile through crooked narrow streets, full of people, to our inn. Here we dined at an ordinary with a company mostly English, merchants' clerks, ship-captains, &c. In the afternoon, we visited the Stadt-house, a most noble square building, well situated in a considerable opening. We ascended to the cupola, and thence had a very fine view over the whole city and the circumjacent country, with the Zuyder-zee and Haarlem-meer. The size of Amsterdam appeared to us about a third of London. Its figure is semicircular, the harbour being its

centre. The ships appear very numerous, but they occupy a much less extent than those in the Thames at London.

"Our friends H. and A. had reached this city before us, and we spent the evening with the latter, and a minister of one of the English churches.

"July 17th. After breakfast we set out with Mr. A. to view the place. We went first to the Jews' quarter, a number of streets inhabited solely by this people, who are confined to it. It is extremely populous, and full of odd faces and dresses. We stepped into the Portuguese Jews' synagogue, a very large fine building. It was their sabbath, and we staid part of the service, which was reading the Hebrew psalter. One man, in a kind of elevated stage railed round, read in a sort of chaunting tone; and every now and then the whole congregation struck in, making a strange discordant clamour. Many were conversing together; and the appearance of the assembly was the furthest possible from indicating reverence and devotion. The men had all a sort of towel wrapt round them. The women were in a latticed gallery and scarcely visible. We saw also the German Jews' synagogue, which is not so large.

"From thence we made a tour of the port, docks, &c. Every thing wore the face of business, but

without noise or confusion. Nothing pleased us more than a visit to one of the *Rhine boats*. These are very long capacious vessels, with two low masts, which carry goods and passengers to and from Germany along the Rhine. On the deck are raised a set of rooms or cabins for the passengers. We went on board one of these, and were invited by a very neat, civil German woman to view the apartments. There was a suite of three or four rooms, not only clean, but elegant, hung with prints, adorned with china, painted wainscots, handsome bed furniture, and in short as finished as any lady's chamber. At the end was a small kitchen, with the utensils as bright as new. The good woman seemed highly satisfied with the marks of pleasure and surprise we showed on the occasion.

"We walked through some of the best streets, the Keysersgraft, Keeren-graft, &c., which run semicircularly from one side of the harbour to the other. We saw many very capital houses, but rather obscured by the rows of trees before them. The canals are nasty and offensive; and on the whole Amsterdam is far from being an agreeable place.

"After dinner we visited the Stadt-house again, and saw the principal rooms, many of which are very fine, and furnished with admirable paint-

ings. Of these, none struck me so much as those relating to the Dutch history. Among them is an admirable piece of Rembrandt, and another of Vandyke, with real portraits of many of the principal persons. There is a very striking picture of the ratification of the treaty by which the United Provinces were declared independent. The Spanish ambassador and the first magistrate of Amsterdam are represented as giving hands. The countenance of the former shows depression and chagrin; of the latter, an honest frankness and satisfaction. The subjects of these pictures, with their antique habits and manners, gave me a lively idea of the heroic times of Holland.

"In the evening we saw more of the best parts of the town, and many truly grand buildings. We also revisited the Jews' quarter. Nothing can be more striking than the entire change of feature, air, dress, and manners, that you meet with on crossing a little bridge; so that one might imagine oneself suddenly transported a thousand miles. The Dutch with plain, heavy, undisguised looks, unanimated, generally fair and with light hair. The Jews sharp, designing, dark; the women frequently handsome though brown, with black wanton eyes and lively gestures. Among the old men were several excellent Shylock faces. The contrast was rendered greater

by its being sabbath on the Jewish side, and saturday on the Dutch.

"July 18th. At ten we left Amsterdam, riding to the boat in a hackney coach set upon a sledge, holding only two persons face to face, and drawn by one horse. The driver walks on one side and behind, having long rope reins. We got to Haarlem to dinner. From thence to Leyden we were obliged to go in the fore part of the boat, as a company had hired all the better end, or roof as they call it. We had, however, very decent company, among whom were some chatty women, who made me regret that I could not understand their conversation. At six we reached Leyden, where I found my thesis printed, and all in readiness.

"July 19th. This was my *grand day*. I was at the college at eleven. The Rector Magnificus, medical professors, and several others, were assembled in the senate room. After waiting half an hour, I was called in, and desired to read some passages in my thesis, which the medical professors *pro forma* attacked, and I defended as well as I could. This was over by twelve, when the ceremony began, which consisted only in administering a Latin oath, and formally pronouncing me *Doctor* with all the rights and privileges

ings. Of these, none struck me so much as those relating to the Dutch history. Among them is an admirable piece of Rembrandt, and another of Vandyke, with real portraits of many of the principal persons. There is a very striking picture of the ratification of the treaty by which the United Provinces were declared independent. The Spanish ambassador and the first magistrate of Amsterdam are represented as giving hands. The countenance of the former shows depression and chagrin; of the latter, an honest frankness and satisfaction. The subjects of these pictures, with their antique habits and manners, gave me a lively idea of the heroic times of Holland.

"In the evening we saw more of the best parts of the town, and many truly grand buildings. We also revisited the Jews' quarter. Nothing can be more striking than the entire change of feature, air, dress, and manners, that you meet with on crossing a little bridge; so that one might imagine oneself suddenly transported a thousand miles. The Dutch with plain, heavy, undisguised looks, unanimated, generally fair and with light hair. The Jews sharp, designing, dark; the women frequently handsome though brown, with black wanton eyes and lively gestures. Among the old men were several excellent Shylock faces. The contrast was rendered gre[illegible]

Jew; and the Jews date from the creation. We observed many English inscriptions on the shops in various parts of the town.

"We dined at the ordinary, with a pretty large company, who all spoke Dutch. A lady, young and modest, came and sat down amongst us, without seeming disconcerted; indeed the men did not put her out of countenance by taking much notice of her. After dinner we repeated our walk, and viewed good part of the town. Rotterdam is a large handsome city, finely situated for commerce, the canals bringing large ships up to the merchants' doors. There are vast stores of all sorts of valuable commodities. We saw some large men of war building and repairing; and some very splendid yachts belonging to various public companies.

"We drank tea at Mr. H.'s father's and found a family almost English, the mother being an Englishwoman. The daughter could not have been distinguished from a native of England. In the evening we went to a public house, close by the ferry of the Maes, where we passed the night to be ready against morning.

"July 21st. We were called up before four, when I had but just got to sleep. Our carriage, a shabby two-wheeled chaise with two horses, was put into a ferry-boat, which landed us on an

ings. Of these, none struck me so much as those relating to the Dutch history. Among them is an admirable piece of Rembrandt, and another of Vandyke, with real portraits of many of the principal persons. There is a very striking picture of the ratification of the treaty by which the United Provinces were declared independent. The Spanish ambassador and the first magistrate of Amsterdam are represented as giving hands. The countenance of the former shows depression and chagrin; of the latter, an honest frankness and satisfaction. The subjects of these pictures, with their antique habits and manners, gave me a lively idea of the heroic times of Holland.

"In the evening we saw more of the best parts of the town, and many truly grand buildings. We also revisited the Jews' quarter. Nothing can be more striking than the entire change of feature, air, dress, and manners, that you meet with on crossing a little bridge; so that one might imagine oneself suddenly transported a thousand miles. The Dutch with plain, heavy, undisguised looks, unanimated, generally fair and with light hair. The Jews sharp, designing, dark; the women frequently handsome though brown, with black wanton eyes and lively gestures. Among the old men were several excellent Shylock faces. The contrast was rendered greater

by its being sabbath on the Jewish side, and saturday on the Dutch.

"July 18th. At ten we left Amsterdam, riding to the boat in a hackney coach set upon a sledge, holding only two persons face to face, and drawn by one horse. The driver walks on one side and behind, having long rope reins. We got to Haarlem to dinner. From thence to Leyden we were obliged to go in the fore part of the boat, as a company had hired all the better end, or roof as they call it. We had, however, very decent company, among whom were some chatty women, who made me regret that I could not understand their conversation. At six we reached Leyden, where I found my thesis printed, and all in readiness.

"July 19th. This was my *grand day*. I was at the college at eleven. The Rector Magnificus, medical professors, and several others, were assembled in the senate room. After waiting half an hour, I was called in, and desired to read some passages in my thesis, which the medical professors *pro forma* attacked, and I defended as well as I could. This was over by twelve, when the ceremony began, which consisted only in administering a Latin oath, and formally pronouncing me *Doctor* with all the rights and privileges

custom-house officers visited us at the gates, but were easily satisfied without opening our baggage. After drinking coffee at our inn (which was a very handsome one, and had the honour two or three years before of lodging the Emperor) we walked about the town attended by a *valet de place*. The mixture of religious edifices with antient stone houses, reminded us of Oxford; while the Madonnas and saints at every corner, crucifixes in the streets, and odd figures of monks and priests, presented a scene perfectly new to us. We walked round half the ramparts to that part of the city which is washed by the Scheldt, a fine river, nearly as broad as the Thames, but having only a few barks upon it. We returned through what had been the trading part of the town, and took a melancholy survey of grass-grown quays, weedy canals, dilapidated warehouses, and close streets thronged with houses, but almost destitute of inhabitants. The famous exchange of Antwerp, as large as those of London and Amsterdam, has its walks obstructed with shabby boarded booths, used as paltry shops at the fair. An old woman selling muscles was the only commercial occupier of the place.

"The town-house is a very large building, scarcely inferior in size to that of Amsterdam; and must have been the finest in Europe when built. It

looks sadly desolate and neglected. The houses in this part of the town are very high, and of a singular architecture, magnificent in their day, but now antiquated. The steeple of the cathedral church is a high gothic tower of most unparalleled lightness and elegance.

"The gloominess of this city is augmented by the dismal dress of the women; the maid servants wearing a large square piece of black stuff over their heads like a hood; and women of the better sort, a kind of long cloak of white camblet with a hood, almost concealing their faces.

"July 22d. After breakfast we sallied forth to view pictures and churches. We first saw a private collection, then St. James's church, the academy of painting or school of Rubens, and lastly the cathedral church of Notre Dame. All the fine pieces we saw were eclipsed by the masterpiece of Rubens in this last church, the taking down from the cross, with the Annunciation on one side and the Purification on the other. It is impossible to conceive painting to go beyond this; but the solemnity of the effect is somewhat diminished by being shown the portraits of Rubens's three wives among the figures.

"The splendour and dignity of the objects in this church, the paintings, statues, marble, sculpture and gilding, with the sumptuous habits of

the priests officiating, were very imposing on the mind, and powerfully apologized to me for the attachment shown to so childish and irrational a religion. Nothing struck me more than the fixed statue-like attention of the people who were paying their devotions in different parts of the church. Not a look was turned aside as we passed before them. In some the finest attitudes and expressions of humility and devotion were to be seen; and I could not doubt but a great deal also was *felt* by the heart; but the nature and value of those feelings seemed very equivocal. The Madonna of Rubens must excite emotions in the most insensible, and, in fact, the Virgin seems to have usurped all honours here. She is the Venus of the Roman Catholic worship; a chaster Venus, but still conveying the idea of a beautiful female. There are in this church two very fine and affecting pictures, the death and ascension of the Virgin.

"The women at prayers were wrapt up in their white cloaks and hoods, which prevented the necessity of all *dress* at this early time of the day.

"At eleven we crossed the Scheldt in a boat, and got a chaise on the other side to carry us to Ghent. We proceeded through an inclosed and highly cultivated country, growing much corn, buck-wheat, and fine flax. The road in some

parts was very heavy and sandy. We dined at a small inn in a village called *Westminster.* From thence the country became more populous, and we passed one considerable town where there seemed to be a manufacture of linen. Several fine villages lay in our road, among which was one extremely neat, most of the houses being white, sashed, with green window-shutters. I got out at one place and walked, while the chaise was baiting, along a pleasant road with rows of trees, under which was a cheerful group of people dressing green flax. One of the men conversed with me in French.

"Near eight we arrived at *Ghent;* the evening so rainy that we could not stir out. Our inn here had the appearance of having been a nobleman's house. It also boasted of having lodged the Emperor; and it lodged us very well.

"July 23d. We left Ghent at eight, taking a coach (as it still rained) to the canal. All we saw of this city was, therefore, in driving through it. It appears a large old town, with many grand buildings.

"We embarked on the Bruges canal on board a vessel with one mast, very elegantly fitted up, with a very handsome cabin at each end, and a kitchen and other rooms between. The quarter-deck was covered with an awning. The com-

pany was a motley group of ladies, gentlemen, priests and common people. We had an agreeable party, in one of the cabins, of some gentlemen and two ladies from Bruges, who spoke French as their native tongue. They were polite and well educated, brown and rather thin, with black eyes and easy lively manners. I remarked some circumstances which showed that *female delicacy* was not quite the same thing in Flanders as in England.

"We proceeded slowly, drawn against the wind by horses. A dinner was cooked on board, and fifteen or sixteen of us sat down to it, among whom were half-a-dozen priests, who joined with cheerfulness and good appetite. It was a meagre day, and we had fish in various fashions, well dressed and neatly served up. Our wine was laid in ice.

"The Flemish seem in general much livelier than the Dutch. French is very commonly understood by all ranks; and those who read are acquainted with French and English literature.

"We drank tea on board, and reached *Bruges* between four and five. We were obliged to go immediately from the bark to the Ostend diligence; so we saw nothing of Bruges but in driving through it. We passed a handsome market-place and town-house; but the buildings in general seemed inferior to Antwerp and Ghent.

"In the diligence were nine people, exclusive of a child at the breast. Though our machine was none of the most commodious, we were jumbled into good humour. We baited half way, when our women passengers by means of a draught of small brisk white wine were thrown into a very merry humour, and we had nothing afterwards but giggling and laughing, especially from one young woman, pretty, and very voluble in Flemish French. The road was a pavement, very straight, through a sandy country where many potatoes are grown.

"We reached *Ostend* at half past nine, and went to a very comfortable (but dear) English house, where we supped in our own fashion with a company almost all English.

"July 24th. I was up early, and paid a visit to the principal church, a tawdry place, with much Roman Catholic finery. Some persons were already paying their devotions. On returning, I was much surprised and pleased to find Mr. and Mrs. E. in our inn, come on purpose from Bruges to see me. We walked over the town with them and their daughter, a girl of about ten, who speaks four languages. Ostend is a tolerable town, with many handsome new buildings run up during the war. Its busy days seemed almost over, though the arrival of some imperial East India-

men had thrown a little life on the place. We observed several of the sailors, with very dusky faces, straw hats and singular dresses, offering trinkets to sell.

"After passing a most agreeable morning and dining all together at the ordinary, we took a reluctant leave of our friends, and embarked at half past four in a small Margate vessel. Dr. K. a young English physician, to whom I had introduced myself at Ostend, was one of our company. There were, besides, a foreign gentleman, a French quack and his wife, and an old Fleming.

"The wind was almost directly contrary; and we were obliged to make many tacks before we could clear the harbour. The night was boisterous; the vessel pitched much, and we made a very slow advance.

"July 25th. Wind still contrary and high. We descried the North Foreland soon in the afternoon, but approached it very slowly. At length we saw the white cliffs distinctly. Porpoises were tumbling around us; and the birds called divers, swimming among the high waves, sometimes disappearing, and then riding sublime on the very ridge of the wave, amused us much. We were so long in working into the harbour, that we did not land till past nine at night at *Margate*.

"July 26th. We rose very early, and viewed the

town, finely situated on the open sea, from which it is protected by a natural and uniform wall of chalk rocks running for miles along the shore. There are several handsome new buildings in the London style for the accommodation of bathers, and many bathing machines lie round the bason. Before six we set off with Dr. K. in a chaise for London, where we arrived at six in the evening."

From London the new graduate returned to his family at Warrington, but with the intention of quitting the place whenever such prospects should open to him in any other town as might justify the experiment of removal.

After some months spent in inquiries, he received information of a vacancy about to occur by the departure of one of the two physicians who divided the practice of the town of Yarmouth in Norfolk; and this intelligence was accompanied with such assurances of support from some of the inhabitants, to whom his connections were well known, as determined him to settle there. Notwithstanding the circumstances which had rendered him justly dissatisfied with his professional situation at Warrington, his feelings on the near prospect of departure made him sensible, that in the way of social and friendly enjoyment he had

many sacrifices to make in quitting that county which had extended so affectionate an adoption to his parents, his sister, and himself; and which was the scene of all the dearest recollections of his youth, and the birth-place of his children. The position of Warrington enabled him to keep up an agreeable intercourse with his friends at Chester, and especially with the dearest and most intimate of them, Dr. Haygarth;—it afforded similar or greater facilities with respect to his Manchester connections, who had recently marked their respect for him by electing him a member of their newly-established Philosophical and Literary Society;—and its station between this place and Liverpool gave him the advantage of the half-way meetings which often took place between the members of the medical profession belonging to these two populous and rising towns. Some circumstances of this nature procured him occasional interviews with Dr. Percival and Dr. Bell of Manchester, with Dr. Dobson of Liverpool, and especially with the late Dr. James Currie of the same place. Towards this accomplished, enlightened, and eminently excellent person, he found himself so strongly attracted by a similarity of tastes and pursuits, and a conformity of views on some of the most important topics of human

speculation, that a very little more opportunity was alone wanting to mature what was already social intimacy into perfect friendship; and enough was done to impress both parties with a lasting esteem, and an unfailing concern for each other's welfare, and to confer on the very few opportunities of intercourse which were afterwards granted them, a character of the most lively interest[a].

He had likewise enjoyed opportunities of forming other acquaintances among the inhabitants of Liverpool which he justly regarded as equally agreeable and advantageous. The distinguished biographer of Lorenzo de' Medici and Leo X., then young and unknown to the world, but already *credited* by his friends for the various abilities which he has since made manifest, was one of those whose society he peculiarly valued, and whose character he contemplated with the most cordial sentiments of esteem and affection;—these sentiments were mutual, and their strength

[a] The present writer, who, many years since, enjoyed much of the pleasure and advantage of Dr. Currie's society during a visit to Liverpool, can never forget the minute and earnest manner in which he questioned her respecting her father's sentiments on many interesting and momentous subjects; and the animated expression of pleasure with which he exclaimed, at the end of this examination—"Then he is the same man I knew twenty years ago!"

has since been proved by a friendship which knew but one termination[a].

With so many social ties to be broken, Dr. Aikin might be excused for regarding his removal to a distant part of the kingdom, where he possessed not a single friend and scarcely even an acquaintance, as a severe trial of fortitude. He

[a] The following particulars of the early period of their acquaintance, communicated to me by Mr. Roscoe himself, are too characteristic as well as pleasing to be omitted.——"It is a satisfaction to my mind to express to one so dear to him the sincere and affectionate attachment I entertained for him, and the gratitude I owe to him for the advantages derived from his friendship and society at an early period of my life. My long acquaintance with him is indeed connected with the most pleasing recollections. From having accompanied him to his little botanical garden in the vicinity of Warrington, I first imbibed a relish for those pursuits; and I well remember that, on his recommendation, I was first led to the perusal of the modern writers of Latin poetry, which has since afforded me an inexhaustible source of pleasure."

In reference to the modern Latin poets, I would observe, that it is somewhat remarkable that the admiration which my father certainly entertained for them, has not left stronger traces in his works. Two translations, however, of short pieces, one of them by Fracastorius, the other by Janus Etruscus, are included in his volume of poems. I know that he accounted Fracastorius as the first of these writers, especially in the didactic style: the others whom he most admired were Sadoletus, Pontanus, Sannazaro, Politianus, and—for classical purity of style rather than originality or brilliancy of imagination—Bembus. The Psalms of Buchanan stood very high in his estimate in the class of translations, and some of Jortin's odes, especially that *Ad Tempus*, he considered as of first-rate excellence. Full accounts of the Latin poets of modern Italy are contained in Mr. Roscoe's Life of Leo the Tenth.

thus expresses himself respecting it to Dr. Haygarth, by whose persuasions chiefly he had been urged to assume his new character.——"Should any thing prevent your coming hither, I shall certainly make a point of visiting you before my departure, for God knows when we shall meet again. If success in my profession was not the first concern in my situation, I should be strongly disposed to reject any offers which would remove me so far from friends I cordially love and esteem. But we are in a world that demands continual sacrifices, and happiness is only to be acquired by accommodating ourselves with good humour to our several necessities."

It was at the close of the year 1784 that Dr. Aikin with his family quitted Warrington on their journey to Norfolk: his excellent mother, who had resided in his house from the period of her husband's death, resolved still to accompany the dearest objects of her affection; but, stopping by the way at the house of her daughter in Suffolk, she there manifested symptoms of decay which in a short period terminated in her death. The rest of the family speedily arrived at the place of their destination, and began to examine with eager interest the new scenes which opened upon them.

Planted on a narrow strip of sand jutting out into the German Ocean, and exposed to the full

fury of the north-eastern blasts which sweep along that flat unsheltered coast, and suffer not a tree or a bush to raise its head with impunity,—nothing can easily be imagined more dreary than the situation of Yarmouth and the immediately adjacent country. The town itself, however, though strangely cramped in its mode of building within the circuit of its ancient walls, is recommended by a striking air of cheerfulness and neatness, and boasts one of the finest quays in the kingdom. The manners of the lower class are remarkably decent and civilised; and as much of literature and refinement prevailed at this time among the richer part of the community, as could reasonably be expected in a commercial town of the second rank, occupying a remote corner of the island.

There was no cause for complaint in the reception given to the newly-arrived family by the general society of the place. A considerable number of the principal people commenced an acquaintance with them, and it soon appeared that they might be occupied in visiting even more than they desired. But a very short trial was sufficient to convince Dr. Aikin that he had been considerably deceived, both as to the whole quantity of medical practice which the town was capable of affording, and the proportion of it which

was likely to fall to his share. The other physician was already established and well supported; and as the field was clearly too narrow for two, he was speedily persuaded that he had not yet found a lasting settlement; though he felt it the part of wisdom to afford himself time for a fair trial of the resources of his present situation. Under these impressions, it may readily be imagined that the first year of his residence at Yarmouth was one of the most anxious periods of his life; and not a little credit seems due to the spirit of practical philosophy and the disposition to be easily pleased and interested, apparent in the following passages of letters written to his sister during this period.

April 7th 1785. "While *you* have had Siberian blasts, we at Yarmouth have not altogether lived on zephyrs. The cry of our night watchmen; 'North-north-east is the wind—North-north-east,' had become perfectly familiar to our ears; and the grand sight of about five hundred ships at anchor waiting for a southern breeze, had lost all its effect upon us, from its duration. From Monday things have changed a little, but the wind has again got round to its old quarter..... My poor *Calendar* has appeared at an unfortunate time for its credit, and I doubt it will be reckoned as fallacious as Poor Robin or Wing.

"Thanks for your invitation of G——. He and we gladly accept it, and you will perhaps shortly see us whisking it over your green in a *Yarmouth cart*[a]. He is a useful man, though, to us, in our rambles with the children by the sea-side, where my wife and I are as much amused as the young ones in picking up shells, pebbles, and sea-weed. We are beginning to make a *collection*, or *museum*, if you please, which you may one day view with much delight and instruction. I do not intend, however, to turn showman, like Sir Ashton, as I begin to have a prospect of a better trade in my own profession. I assure you, things mend upon me, and all the world does not continue so obstinately healthy, or so afraid of a physician. I have had, and now have, *some* patients. My rival is one of my most familiar and agreeable acquaintance, and I find several more whose company is better than none."

Late in the month of September, writing to Mrs. Barbauld, who was then on a tour in France, he describes himself as without medical employment at that time; and laments that the publication of Rousseau's *Letters on Botany*, with some additional ones by Mr. Martyn, had superseded a favorite

[a] A low open carriage of very simple construction and humble appearance, commonly used by the inhabitants of Yarmouth, as peculiarly adapted to their narrow lanes called *Rows*.

scheme of his own; but consoles himself with the translation of Tacitus which he had resumed as a winter employment. He mentions the pleasure of a visit from his beloved friend Dr. Enfield, whom a fortunate invitation from a congregation at Norwich had now brought to reside within twenty miles of him; and afterwards he proceeds thus:

"We have had a good deal of amusement here from the annual visit of the Dutch fishermen. About fifty of their schuyts came up our river, and lay for three or four days at the quay in an uniform regular line. The town was filled with great breeches, and on the Sunday all the country flocked in to see the sight, so that the whole length of the quay was crowded. The gradual approach of the schuyts with their yellow sails glittering in the sun, and their progress up the river in a line one after the other, were very striking spectacles.....

"But how I long to be with you, 'To quaff the pendent vintage as it grows;' to see a gay people in their gayest mood, and lead the dance with a sun-burnt Champenoise on the green turf! Here, different employ! we are fitting out fishing-boats, preparing nets and cordage, launching to sea, and hunting out for the mighty shoals of herrings in their annual migration. Already some are brought

in, and carts loaded with them are now driving by. Here is industry, and here are the sources of wealth; but where are pleasure, and elegance and vivacity? If employments must give a tincture and flavour to those occupied in them, surely one would prefer the perfume of the grape to the stench of a herring."

The inspiring influence of his sister's letters, describing alternately the gay and the sublime scenes which opened to her on her journey, and rendered still more impressive, perhaps, by the contrast of his own situation, roused all his poetic talent, and produced soon after an epistle to her in verse, which well deserves to be quoted among the most pleasing records of the writer's mind.

To Mrs. Barbauld at Geneva.

"From Yare's low banks, where through the marshy plain
He leads his scanty tribute to the main,
On sea-girt Albion's furthest Eastern bound
Where direful shoals extend their bulwark round,—
To thee I turn, my sister and my friend!
On thee from far the mental vision bend.
O'er land, o'er sea, freed Fancy speeds her flight,
Waves the light wing, and towers her airy height:
And now the chalky cliffs behind her fly,
And Gallia's realms in brilliant prospect lie;
Now rivers, plains, and woods and vales are cross'd,
And many a scene in gay confusion lost,
'Till 'mid Burgundian hills she joins her chase,
And social pleasure crowns the rapid race.

"Fair land! by nature deck'd, and graced by art,
Alike to cheer the eye and glad the heart,
Pour thy soft influence thro' Lætitia's breast,
And lull each swelling wave of care to rest;
Heal with sweet balm the wounds of pain and toil,
Bid anxious, busy years restore their spoil;
The spirits light, the vigorous soul infuse,
And, to requite thy gifts, bring back the Muse.
For sure that Muse, whose far-resounding strains
Ennobled Cyrnus' rocks and Mersey's plains,
Shall here with boldest touch awake the lyre,
Soar to new heights, and glow with brighter fire.
Methinks I hear the sweetly-warbled note
On Seine's meand'ring bosom gently float;
Suzon's rude vale repeats the charming voice,
And all around the vine-clad hills rejoice:

"Now all thy grots, Auxcelles! with music sound;
From crystal roofs and vaults the strains rebound:
Besançon's splendid towers the song partake,
And breezes waft it to the Leman lake.
Delightful lake! whose margin gay and green
Smiles in soft contrast to the rugged scene
Of stern-brow'd Alps, where storms eternal roll,
How must thy varied charms entrance the soul!
With what high passions must thy prospect move
The heart that beats to liberty and love!
Around, fair Freedom builds her lofty throne,
And rocks and valour guard it for her own;
While deep within embowering shades conceal'd,
To none but Cupid's mystic band reveal'd,
Clarens! thy roofs ascend, with turrets crown'd,
And love and Julia fill th' enchanted ground.

Such, my Lætitia, on thy ravish'd eyes
Bursts the bright scene, the vivid landscapes rise;
While from my sight the air-drawn pictures fade,
And Fancy's glass bedimm'd denies its aid;

The colours melt, the lines dissolve in space,
And cold realities usurp the place.

"What different scenes succeed!—a steril shore,
Long level plains, the restless ocean's roar,
The rattling car, the shipwright's sturdy toil,
The far-spread net, and heaps of finny spoil.
Keen Eurus here sweeps o'er th' unsheltered land,
Shakes the strong dome, and whirls the loosen'd sand:
Fair Flora shrinks, the trees averted bend,
While their thin boughs a scanty shade extend:
And, for the flowering thicket's cheerful notes,
Here hungry sea-fowl stretch their clamorous throats.

"And yet, e'en here, the soul-directed sight,
Which nature's views in ev'ry form delight,
May catch, as o'er the brighten'd scene they gleam,
Grandeur's strong ray, or beauty's softer beam.
Frequent along the pebbly beach I pace,
And gaze intent on ocean's varying face.
Now from the main rolls in the swelling tide,
And waves on waves in long procession ride;
Gath'ring they come, till, gain'd the ridgy height,
No more the liquid mound sustains its weight;
It curls, it falls, it breaks with hideous roar,
And pours a foamy deluge on the shore.
From the bleak pole now driving tempests sweep,
Tear the light clouds, and vex the ruffled deep,
White o'er the shoals the spouting breakers rise,
And mix the waste of waters with the skies:
The anchoring vessels, stretch'd in long array,
Shake from their bounding sides the dashing spray;
Lab'ring they heave, the tighten'd cables strain,
And danger adds new horror to the main.
Then shifts the scene, as to the western gales
Delighted Commerce spreads her crowded sails.
A cluster'd group the distant fleets appear,
That scatt'ring breaks in varied figures near:

Now, all-illumin'd by the kindling ray,
Swan-like, the stately vessel cuts her way:
The full-wing'd barks now meet, now swiftly pass,
And leave long traces in the liquid glass:
Light boats, all sail, athwart the current bound,
And dot with shining specks the surface round.
Nor with the day the sea-born splendors cease:
When evening lulls each ruder gale to peace,
The rising moon with silvery lustre gleams,
And shoots across the flood her quivering beams.
Or if deep gloom succeeds the sultry day,
On ocean's bosom native meteors play,
Flash from the wave, pursue the dipping oar,
And roll in flaming billows to the shore.

" 'Tis thus, within this narrow nook confined,
I strive to feed with change th' insatiate mind
But surer aid the Muses' stores impart,
With each new world of science and of art;
And, more than all, the joys of sacred home
Forbid my heart to pant, my feet to roam.
Yet one dear wish still struggles in my breast,
And points one darling object unpossess'd:
How many years have whirl'd their rapid course
Since we, sole streamlets from one honour'd source,
In fond affection as in blood allied,
Have wander'd devious from each other's side;
Allow'd to catch alone some transient view,
Scarce long enough to think the vision true!
O then, while yet some zest of life remains,
While transport yet can swell the beating veins,
While sweet remembrance keeps her wonted seat,
And fancy still retains some genial heat,
When evening bids each busy task lie o'er,
Once let us meet again,—to part no more!

A year of experiment was sufficient entirely to convince Dr. Aikin of the correctness of his first judgement concerning the probable unproductiveness of Yarmouth to him, as a medical station; and he was now fully bent on a change of residence. The choice of a new scene of action still however remained matter of anxious deliberation, till his doubts were ended in the manner related in the following letter to Dr. Haygarth, dated December 1785.

"You will, I doubt not, my dear friend, be pleased to hear, that after my discussion and rejection of so many schemes for a change in my situation, I have at length come to a determination. The decision is a bold one, but I hope it is well weighed, and that it will appear to my friends as well as myself, not too hazardous. London is the place, after all, where I am to make my efforts. The prize is worthy of a contest, though I confess it would be little consolation to have it said, in case of a failure, 'magnis tamen excidit ausis.'

"I took a journey, about three weeks since, to Bedfordshire and St. Albans, to reconnoitre there, where I have connections; but I could find little encouragement. Thence I went to London and saw all my relations and friends, and, to my surprise, found them almost unanimous in advising

me to venture at the metropolis, with such assurances of support, or confidence of presage, that all my fears and reluctancies at length gave way, and I left town with a resolution to prepare as soon as possible for my settlement there.....In the line I am to follow, I do not think it will be of so much consequence to *make a noise*, as assiduously to cultivate all private friendships and acquaintances, and to get introduced as much as possible to families. Yet if an hospital, or a partnership in lecturing should be easily procurable, I shall certainly offer myself. In short, it is my resolution to be active and pushing, and even to force my natural disposition, if it stands in my way."

With these prospects and resolutions, he removed to London, and fixed himself with his family in the city; where the chief strength of his connections at that time lay. The fame of his literary productions had preceded him in many quarters; and as it may safely be affirmed in his case, that the *man* never disappointed the warmest admirers of the *author*, he found himself rapidly making his way in society, and beginning to unite the general suffrage to the cordial attachment of relations and family-friends. With so much in his reception to flatter self-applause, and minister food to ambition, added to the common

attractions of the metropolis for every inquiring mind and active spirit,—his relinquishment of his new situation within the space of four months, was a sacrifice of the brilliant to the solid,—or, to speak more truly, of immediate personal gratification, to the security and welfare of his family, which must be contemplated, by the most indifferent, with respect and approbation, and can never be recalled by the immediate objects of so generous a self-devotion, without the liveliest emotions of gratitude. An event of the most unexpected nature was the source of this total change of plan: This was the sudden dereliction of his situation by the physician who had remained at Yarmouth in full possession of the field. The result is thus communicated by Dr. Aikin, in a letter to his sister:

....."Immediately on this event, an invitation to me was drawn up, and signed by almost every body of all parties in the town, promising their utmost support in case I would return. Such a testimony of respect and attachment could not but move me; and the idea of immediately coming into the undisturbed possession of a decent competence, instead of the expensive and precarious struggle for distant success in London, operated very powerfully in a prudential view. For though I have met with many civilities here, and

formed many agreeable acquaintances, yet, on the whole, I am more sensible than before of the length of time and effort necessary to make one's way in town. I laid the whole state of the case before my nearest friends and relations, and we endeavoured to make some calculation of a moderate certainty, compared to a splendid uncertainty. But all seemed to agree, that prudence could not hesitate in determining for the former.

"Inclination pleaded most strongly, with both my wife and myself, to stay amidst our dearest connections, and enjoy that sweet society which would soon be probably augmented by so dear an addition as yourselves. But the good of our family was a consideration not to be surmounted, and we could not make ourselves easy in hazarding their advantage for the sake of our own enjoyment. I was compelled, therefore, to accept the flattering offer made me; and as the case would not admit delay, I wrote immediately, and am to go down to take possession of my post to-morrow.....

"To attempt to describe the crowd of mixed emotions which agitate me on this occasion, would only aggravate whatever there is in them distressing and unpleasant. I see at once all that I lose,—the great, the lasting sacrifices that I make. My compensation is to be that state of tranquil-

lity and security which it requires time and leisure to enjoy completely, and the operation of which, though great in the scale of life, is not to be represented in striking colours. All that remains for us is, to make the best advantage of every opportunity of happiness that lies in our way, and acquiesce as well as we can in every privation and disappointment."

That every sacrifice of lower motives of action to higher,—of the selfish principle to the social,—is immediately and certainly rewarded by the internal emotions of the individual, and in most cases by the concurring sentiments of others, is the great truth which cannot be too often repeated, or too variously illustrated; and it will, on this account, be useful, as well as satisfactory, to contemplate the state of mind exhibited in the following passages of a letter to Dr. Haygarth:

"Your very kind letter, and the decided approbation you bestow on my late removal, give me peculiar satisfaction. Indeed, all my friends unite in telling me I have determined wisely, according to a collected view of all the circumstances:—even my friend Mr. B—y, who, with yourself, was always a stimulator of my ambition, is compelled to the same conclusion.

"I have now been here a month, and find my situation, with regard to the respect with which I

am treated, and the emoluments I enjoy, fully equal to my expectations. I also feel much pleasure in becoming again a man of business, filling a post of some use and consequence in society. I have just purchased a very good and pleasant house, which every body says is an extremely cheap bargain. My wife and family are as yet in town or elsewhere, and I am in lodgings. But I hope soon to recommence that domestic life, which, to persons so happy in their connections as you and I are, is the only scene of real felicity.

"I lately made an augmentation of my medical library, at a cheap rate, at a sale. Sauvages, Lieutaud, and some other good books, are among them; and I frequently consult them by way of comparing what I meet with in practice, with description. I keep a case-book, upon the plan of yours, and find it very useful and improving. I have already entered above a score, all in Latin.

"Mr. Howard is now in Italy, from whence he means to go to Sicily, and thence to Constantinople. If he escapes the plague or a prison, I shall think him indeed heaven-protected.

"I recollect nothing else at present to communicate; yet if we could have a Frodsham meeting again, how much should we both find to say! But peace, ye vain regrets,—let me not dwell

upon things that were, and 'were most dear to me!'"

Another letter, written to the same friend some months afterwards, preserves a similar tone of habitual contentedness, and also affords some interesting notices of the pursuits and sentiments of the writer.

"How many things have I to say to you, which cannot come within the compass of a letter! O Frodsham, Frodsham! but regret is vain, and even unreasonable, when, having had before us the advantages and disadvantages of various situations, we have made our choice, and have reason, on the whole, to be satisfied with it. I am now, as I think, perfectly settled; and though I have little reason to think either that my gains will be large, or my reputation extended, I know not where, upon the whole, I could be better. My London expedition is like a strange dream to my mind, and in a few years I shall scarcely be able to consider it as a reality. I should now and then feel a little disappointment at the loss of the brilliant and lively prospects it afforded, did I not immediately call to mind the circumstances of midwifery,—rivalship,—intrigue,—meanness,—hazard,—and family sickness, which must have accompanied them; and then I perfectly acqui-

esce in the change. I now live in a good house of my own, with a cheerful family about me, amidst agreeable acquaintance, in a respectable rank of life; and want nothing but a little more business, both by way of employment, and for profit. But I can keep my head above water; and perhaps in time my fame may extend to a dozen miles' distance; and then I shall be somebody in the world. To speak without jesting, I have a tolerable range southwards in Suffolk, and have already been called in by all the surgeons of Beccles, a good market town fourteen miles off.

"You ask me what I am doing in the literary way. Truly, nothing but amusing myself, and that is all I intend doing hereafter; for really one has such a terrible line of critics to run the gauntlet through, that I shall scarcely have courage again to face them. I employ some of my leisure in practising to write medical Latin, for no other particular purpose than that of keeping my cases with some elegance. My way is, to translate pretty literally a page or two of Celsus, or some other good writer, and the next day render it back into Latin and compare the two. I now and then scribble a few verses, and always have some entertaining book in reading, which prevents time from hanging heavy upon my hands. As for philosophy, chemistry, and the

other studies which require close attention and much application, I think in my present situation I do most wisely in letting them slip by. What are they now to me, further than an amusement? and I own I find little amusement in them. The *musæ elegantiores* were always more to my taste.

"But, *ipse quid audes?* You say nothing of your own pursuits, nor in what way you are now consulting the public good; for as every man has his amusement, that was always yours. Do you keep the small pox at bay yet? Do you defy infectious fevers? Are all the youth of Chester instructed and humanized under your plans? What are your favorite books? Have you read Cowper's Task? If you have, you will join with him in saying 'England, with all thy faults I love thee still, my country!' The ardor of his soul will in some degree correspond with yours, and I doubt not that you will be struck with his poetic beauties, which I think in some respects almost unequalled. Yes, I do think upon the whole ours a very tolerable country, nor would I quit it even to be a Dutch or American republican.

"With respect to my friends the Dutch, I own I admire their spirit, and augur well as to the issue of the patriotic cause. Why need a republic tie themselves to the controul of hereditary

fools, contrary to the fundamental principles of their state? There will be no civil war, I dare say; and foreign powers will prevent each other from hurting them. You have guessed whence the account of the Dutch visit to this place proceeded. I believe I shall frequently send a trifle to the Gentleman's Magazine, and since that, have inserted there an account of our maritime plants, and an Apology for Literary Physicians."

Various were the resources which occurred to Dr. Aikin for filling up his intervals of leisure during the year 1787. At the earnest request of his friend Dr. Percival, he received his eldest son into his house, for the purpose of initiation in medical studies, and this connection subsisted with mutual satisfaction for more than a year; though the preference of the pupil for the clerical profession, proved in the end insuperable. Another source of employment was supplied to him by the return of Mr. Howard from the long and perilous journey referred to in a previous extract. Previously to his departure, this gentleman had been furnished at his own request, by Dr. Jebb and my father, with a set of queries relative to the plague, to be addressed to the medical practitioners of such ports of the Levant as he proposed to visit: and on his return, he put the answers to these queries, with such other documents

respecting this dreadful malady as he had been able to procure, into the hands of my father, who compiled from them all the medical part of Mr. Howard's work on Lazarettos. Several of these documents were in Italian; and it was for the purpose of understanding them that he taught himself that language; the poets, historians and biographers of which afterwards proved to him an invaluable source of instruction and delight. Some of his earliest impressions respecting the Italian poets are thus communicated to Mrs. Barbauld.

"....You may imagine that amid all these engagements, Italian has not been much pursued. I have however read through the *Aminta;* and with more pleasure than I could have supposed an *idle love tale* could now have given me. There are, indeed, some charming passages, and I could easily trace some of our most admired poets as imitators of this original. Did you never feel the pleasure one experiences in meeting with a passage in its right place already familiar to us in quotation? I felt this highly on finding in the Aminta those beautiful lines quoted in the *Nouvelle Heloise*, "Congiunti eran l'alberghi," &c. I have also read the *Siroe* of Metastasio, the plot of which is, to be sure, gloriously absurd. His lovers are so pitifully tame and humble, and his heroines such

insolent viragoes, that I feel very little interest in their affairs."

During the year 1788 he was employed in the composition of his popular little work, England Delineated. He described it to be his intention here, "to sketch a bold and strong outline, whereby the *discriminating character* of each county may be impressed on the mind;" and I may be permitted to remark, that there were few things in which his peculiar talent shone more than in this kind of spirited sketching. The uncommon clearness both of his ideas and his style, enabled him, with a few strokes, to convey images at once distinct and lively; and his works for young people abound with these *bird's-eye views* of various departments of knowledge, which he thought it advantageous early to spread before them, that they might be enabled immediately to arrange, with an approach at least to accuracy, such ideas of detail as they should afterwards accumulate. Few of his works were executed with more pleasure to himself than this: geographical and topographical pursuits were always congenial to his taste; in its least attractive forms, knowledge of this kind was welcome to his mind, and when embellished by the charms of eloquence and poetry, a source of high delight. I have often witnessed the admiration with which he perused

the description of the site of Constantinople, and the other geographical delineations traced by the masterly hand of Gibbon; and the enthusiasm with which he dwelt upon the splendid *panoramas* of the ancient world exhibited by Milton in his Paradise Lost, and Paradise Regained[a].

Another occupation of the leisure of this year, but rather of a professional than literary nature, was the preparation of another new edition of Lewis's Materia Medica, with all the alterations of the last London Pharmacopœia, and two or three new articles. He was likewise engaged in initiating in the elements of medicine, the second son of Dr. Percival, who had taken his brother's place under his tuition, and entered upon professional studies with such ardor and success as to excite high hopes of future eminence, which were unhappily frustrated by an untimely death. About the same time, various circumstances conspired to lead him on in a train of thought,

[a] Besides the merit of the plan and general execution, England Delineated had that of bringing before the public a very considerable quantity of new and accurate information concerning particular towns and districts, obtained from many respectable correspondents to whom diligent application was made by the author. This work received considerable accessions in several successive editions; and a new modification of the work, comprising many fresh heads of information, was published in one closely printed octavo volume under the title of England Described: Baldwin, Cradock, and Joy, 1819.

which afterwards broke forth in such a variety of forms in his writings, and influenced his conduct in so many important particulars, that it will be proper to trace its origin and progress. He had early learned from the precepts and example, doubtless, of his excellent father, to regard the different degrees of moral worth and intellectual proficiency as the only really important distinctions among mankind. In consequence of this estimate of things, no man was ever, not in theory alone but in practice, less of a respecter of persons; for while he disdained to pay court to the ignorant and the profligate, whatever their rank and fortune, or their ability to promote his own worldly interests, he always discovered a benevolent willingness to enter into conversation with persons in the humblest stations, if possessed of decent manners, and of the disposition to seek, or the power to communicate, useful knowledge, of whatever kind. As a medical man, his intercourse with the lower classes was constant and extensive;—for his gratuitous assistance was always at their free disposal,—and in the situations in which he saw them, he often found himself called upon to pay homage to their social and domestic virtues, while he compassionated their sufferings and deplored their hardships. The combined result then of his principles

and his experience was, a remarkable degree of *fellow-feeling with the poor*, a desire to raise them in their own estimation and that of others to what he regarded as their due level, and a fixed opinion that the extreme inequality of conditions was both an evil and an injustice of the greatest magnitude, and one which it was the duty of a Government calling itself free and enlightened, to take measures for lessening. The state of the poor in Norfolk at the period of his removal thither, was peculiarly calculated to give force to these ideas. A long and progressive diminution of demand for the woollen fabrics of Norwich, had gradually impoverished the laboring classes throughout a considerable district; and the alarming increase of poor's-rates consequent upon their inability to find regular employment, had suggested various plans for the cheaper maintenance of persons who had become chargeable to their parish. Among these was the erection of houses of industry, two or three of which had been established on what was regarded as an improved plan, and were zealously patronized by the county magistrates. A visit to one of these, made under the conduct of a zealous friend and advocate of the design, had the unexpected effect of suggesting to Dr. Aikin the following remarks, which first appeared in the Gentleman's Magazine for

January 1788, and afterwards received the distinction, highly valued by their author, of being reprinted by Mr. Howard, at his own expense, in a separate form for general circulation.

"At a time when so many new schemes are in agitation for the better management of the poor, while objections are raised against them all, and yet all acknowledge that some alterations and improvements are necessary; I beg to be indulged with the insertion of a few observations on two points which ought to be considered previously to the establishment of any new mode, and a proper attention to which might decide the preference due to one above another. These points are, the RIGHTS OF THE POOR, and the COMFORTS OF THE POOR.

"With respect to the Poor Man's RIGHTS, I presume they are *naturally* the same with the rich man's. Set the prince and the basket-maker together upon a desolate island, and it is certain the birth of the former will not be so good a plea for superiority as the skill of the latter. But in a *state of society*, the *rights* of the poor man must be estimated by the *sacrifices* he has made (or has acquiesced in) for the benefit of that society. Now these are great indeed. He has resigned to the landlord all his share of the ground which his own hands cultivate; not reserving to himself so much as will bury him. He has lent to

the merchant and manufacturer the use of his limbs, as an engine to procure them wealth, at a rate much below their real value. He has relinquished, to those who are called his betters, all claim to power, rank, title, and respect, and is content to swell the pomp of state by the contrast he exhibits of meanness opposed to grandeur; without which comparative relation neither of them would exist. What then, in such an unequal distribution, is left him? Surely the security, at least, that his condition shall not become still worse (unless by his own fault); and that, like the bee which resigns her treasures to man, he may remain unmolested in his hive, and be fed with a portion of that honey which he collects for his masters. If this be denied him, will he not be apt to call for a fresh division of the common property, and say, "Give me the portion of good things which falleth unto me?" Heavy as is the burden of poor-rates, I suppose the opulent do not wish for such a liquidation of the account. I conceive it, therefore, to be the *right* of the poor man, *at all events*, and notwithstanding the burdens which may seem to press upon the rich, to be secured in the continuance of the humble enjoyments belonging to his station. A *willingness to labour* is all the return that can be required of him. If, either by age or sickness, he is rendered incapable of labor, or if no work can be found

for him, he may still demand his usual scanty share from those, who, without labouring any more than he, are supplied with abundance out of the *general stock*. It is not enough, then, to provide for the poor, by keeping their souls and bodies together in the cheapest manner possible; they are to be maintained in the possession of their *comforts*.

"What are the poor man's COMFORTS? They lie in a small compass; and therefore ought to be the more sacred.

"One great source of comfort to the poor man is his *wife and children*, if he be not overburdened by them. Despised and insignificant as he may be abroad, he is of some consequence at home. He finds there those who care for him, who obey him; to whom he may say, Go, and they go; and Come, and they come. He is not without a sense of the charities of father, son, and husband; and, when sick and dispirited, it is the greatest of his comforts to be attended upon by those who love and regard him. There may be some danger of sinking even a stout heart by the forcible separation of husband and wife, parents and children, in times of sickness and distress; nor would one surely wish them to be entirely indifferent to each other.

"The poor man, poor as he is, loves to cherish some idea of *property*;—to say, *my* house, *my* garden, *my* furniture; and when his whole domestic establishment goes to wreck on a removal to a workhouse, he is weak enough to grieve a little at the loss of things that by use were become precious to him. He does not like to consider himself only as a lodger or a guest, though in a much finer mansion than his own;—he does not wear with satisfaction clothes, though warm, that belong to the *community*, and not to *himself*. And are not these respectable prejudices?

"The poor man is comforted under his poverty by thinking himself *free*. This freedom of his, God knows, is circumscribed by such a number of imperious necessities, that it is reduced to little in effect; but he pleases himself in imagining that he possesses it; and that he may go out or come in, work or play, at his own option. He likes to be the judge of his own wants, and to provide for them after his own manner. He even chooses to have the determination whether he shall boil or bake his Sunday's dinner. Then he cannot be easy under *confinement*, abhors the thought of being under *lock and key*, and thinks no man deserves a *prison* who has not committed a crime. To be a cypher in the state, and therefore

a *slave*, according to the idea of some political theorists, does not hurt him at all; but he has a mortal dislike to arbitrary rule exercised over all his actions. And is it in England that one would wish to extinguish these feelings!

"Lastly, the poor man places some of his comfort (often, it must be acknowledged, too much of it) in *social* and *convivial enjoyments*. The bare mention of these, in a poor man, strikes many with the idea of great criminality, and the appellations of drunken and idle are liberally bestowed with great indignation. To get drunk, and squander at an ale-house what ought to maintain his family, is undoubtedly very wrong in a poor man: but that, after a hard day's or week's labour, he should love to relax a little in that place which affords "an hour's importance to the poor man's heart," is surely so natural that it cannot deserve much censure. The evening chat at a neighbour's door, the Sunday's church-yard politics, the holiday festivities, the rustic games, and athletic exercises, are as welcome to the labourer, as the Opera-house and Almack's to the lord; and who will say, that the pleasures of the former are not as well earned as those of the latter? Without these sweeteners, what would be the bitter cup of a poor man's life! What *is* the life of him who is compelled to sustain a tasteless and melancholy

being within the barred precincts of a workhouse, where the names of freedom, property, and cheerfulness, are unknown?"

Similar views are further opened in a letter addressed to a medical friend, in the autumn of the same year.

"The state of the poor has indeed considerably occupied my thoughts, and I heartily wish their situation was bettered, not only by the exertions of private charity, but by a spirit of justice, and a due sense of the natural equality of mankind. Their state is, indeed, so bad in many respects, that, considering they form the great bulk of the community, it ought, I think, to diminish our boasts of a perfect form of constitution, and incite us to some extensive and effectual reform. As I have no idea of the value of human life, independent of its happiness, I am ready to acknowledge that the preservation of the lives of the infant poor is not, of itself, any great object with me; and I am convinced that till they are *themselves* interested in the safety of their children, no public institution for preventing the spread of the small pox or other contagious diseases among them will avail. I always thought it a kind of solecism to *pay* people for taking care of *their own children;* and in the present state of things I think it quite enough to offer them gratuitously the best

means of preservation. It hurts me to have the poor treated as absolutely irrational animals. Give them rights and comforts,—make life an object of desire to them,—and then they will take care of themselves."

The bearing of these sentiments on his political ideas is made evident by a subsequent passage in the same letter.

"I did not expect my political ode[a] would altogether please you; but I value the frankness with which you tell me it does not. I cannot, however, allow that its sentiments go to the destruction of our constitution, which surely, inasmuch as it is a *free* one, comes under my definition of a *commonwealth*, viz. one in which the basis of the legislative power is laid in the body of the people. I only wish strongly to inculcate this leading idea, the fair conclusion from which I take to be, that the popular part of our constitution is the only essential part, and that the rest is valuable solely as it secures the safe and temperate exercise of this. To this state of political opinion, I have been gradually led by following, as fairly as I was able, and in opposition to former prejudices, a few simple principles; and nothing but a train of still more conclusive reason-

[a] Ode to the Genius of a Commonwealth, afterwards published among his Poems.

ing will probably induce me to change. It is, however, one of those subjects on which I can very well agree to differ with my friends."

It was in this state of his feelings, that the French revolution broke upon the world; and it will not appear wonderful that he should have been found in the number of its warm admirers, when it is recollected that its commencements were universally hailed by the friends of popular rights, in this and other countries, as the auspicious dawn of a new era of light and happiness.

But, it is well known that, even from the beginning, long before its progress was stained with blood and horrors, this great event was viewed with extreme jealousy by a majority of the higher classes in England, and especially by the established clergy; and that in most of our commercial towns, which have always been the strongholds of the protestant dissenters, and in corporate towns especially, the aristocratic and democratic parties, as they were then called, nearly coincided with the distinction of churchmen and dissenters. This division was rendered more exact, and the feelings which attended it doubly acrimonious, by the proceedings relative to the repeal of the corporation and test acts, which happened to coincide in time with the promulgation of the new constitution of France. When, in

March 1790, the dissenters found the abolition of this invidious law, which had nearly been carried in a former session, finally rejected by the votes of an overwhelming majority of the house of Commons, they were stung with a keen sense of the injustice of their country; and the best pens among them were sharpened for an appeal to public opinion,—the only resource which was left them. Bound to the dissenters by the ties of birth, connections, and personal obligations, Dr. Aikin did not hesitate on this occasion to stand forth as their champion; and two strongly written pamphlets attested his zeal in the cause. These pieces were published anonymously, but without any precautions for the concealment of the writer from the inquiries of either friends or foes.

In those days of party violence, no one whose situation was in any respect a dependent one, was permitted to take the weaker side with impunity; nor was it long before Dr. Aikin was made to bear the penalty of his conscientious and disinterested efforts. Of the clergy resident in and near Yarmouth, whose literary acquirements and polished manners had hitherto rendered them his most congenial and agreeable associates, one alone had the courage and the liberality to stand by him without wavering in this season of trial. The members of the corporation and the high

party generally, though not without some honorable exceptions, were pleased to consider themselves as absolved, *by circumstances*, from the engagement to support him, into which they had voluntarily entered on his coming to Yarmouth; and after studying to make him feel in various modes the weight of their displeasure, they entered into secret machinations for inviting another physician to take up his abode among them.

Meanwhile he continued to bear his head erect, as a man conscious of none but worthy motives, and prepared to stand to the consequences of his actions without shrinking;—but his natural disposition was so averse to turbulence and strife, that he could not see himself engaged, however innocently, in a conflict of this nature, without experiencing the most uneasy emotions; and he privately resolved, if the storm did not soon blow over, to yield to its fury and fly to the shelter of some friendly port.

The following poetical epistle, addressed to one of the dearest of his friends, expresses with great truth and feeling the fluctuations of his mind at this period, on contemplating the doubtful futurity which lay before him.

EPISTLE TO THE REV. W. ENFIELD, LL.D.

ON PERUSING IN MANUSCRIPT HIS ABRIDGEMENT OF BRUCKER'S HISTORY OF PHILOSOPHY.

Despicere unde queas alios, passimque videre
Errare atque viam palantes quærere vitæ.

LUCRET.

" O Friend, to whose clear sight the mystic roll
Of wisdom lies display'd, where spreading wide
From India's, Egypt's, or Chaldea's root,
Thro' fertile Grecian branches, to the boughs
And twigs innumerous of a later growth,
The Tree of Knowledge stands, opake and full,
(I ween, not fruitless, like the shady elm
Of Orcus, where each leaf conceal'd a dream,)
Suspend thy toil severe, and deign awhile
On me, thy old companion, long belov'd,
Much favor'd, to bestow the precious boon
Of open converse, such as friendship loves
And freedom dictates. Many a school-drawn knot,
Tough web of sophistry, and tangled skein
Of metaphysic, by thy skilful hand
I see unravell'd, and with thee can soar,
Borne by the puffy, gas-inflated ball
Of speculation, to those fields of air
Where elements are bred and systems nurs'd.
But, for such subtle regions all too gross,
I gravitate to earth, and rather love
By clear Ilissus, or the shady groves
Of Tusculum, or Tibur's still retreats,
To court the placid power of *moral truth*.
Come then, my friend, whose pure benignant breast
Is wisdom's best interpreter, O come,
And teach me *how to live*; for, sure, 'tis time,
When from the traveller's gaze the westering sun
Posts down the sky, 'tis time his course were fix'd.

" What then is man's chief bliss?—to lift the soul,
By lonely contemplation, to the source
Of good and fair, with Reason's essence pure
To feed the thought; and on the trivial scene
Of sublunary things look down unmov'd,
Self-honor'd, self-dependent,—or to call
Each potent energy to active use,
And urge the flying moments with the weight
Of strong exertion, pressing ardent on
To some bright point of distance,—or to steal
With loitering foot along the vale obscure,
And pluck gay flowers, and dally with the time
In careless sport, and song, and converse sweet,
Delightful interchange!—or, plodding on,
With rule in hand, with grave and measur'd step,
To pace the level, line-drawn avenue,
Where business, meals, and sleep, in order due,
Like shrubs and statues in a Dutchman's walk,
Succeed unvaried? Say, in which of these,
The paths of human life, her fairy tread
Has Happiness imprinted? Shall we try,
By beating wide the ground, to catch a glimpse
Of the still-flying phantom; or pursue
With heedful diligence one chosen track?
For me, whom Fate has destin'd to the round
Of sober business, and as sober joys;
Whose roving wing is clipt; whose eager eye,
Agaze for distant wonders, must contract
Its narrowed focus to a map and book;
Who, for the vivid flash of living wit
And voice-clad eloquence, must court the beams
That shine in faint reflection from the page;
How shall I best preserve the genial flame
Alive within my breast? how trim the lamp
And clear from gathering dregs and vapours dim?
Soon, soon, the brief delights of sense must fail;
And buoyant spirits, from the rapid tide

Of youthful blood evolv'd, wax tame and dull.
What then shall save me from the palsying grasp
Of cold Indifference, leagued with sick Disgust,
Slack Listlessness, and sullen Melancholy?
Terrific group! Will poring o'er the leaves
Of sage Philosophy, with elbow chair,
Fire-side, and winking taper, chase away
These black intruders? Ah! too well I know,
Already know, how hang the heavy hours
Of studious indolence, that only seeks
In thoughts of other men to lose its own.
Then shall I seize the quill? screw high each chord
That vibrates in the brain; dilate the breast
With mighty heavings; rouse the throbbing heart
With keen emotions; touch with noble fire,
And pour the glowing torrent on the page?
Or, arm'd with patient industry, lead on
To slow maturity some fair design,
The child of use and knowledge, which may stand
A monument for ages? such as thine,
Where learning, sense, and lucid order, clad
In clear expression, frame a perfect whole.
Or rather, pens and books thrown far aside,
Relume Ambition's fire, with desperate plunge
Rush in the crowd, and elbowing on my way
Thro' friends, thro' foes, and fierce Contention's din,
Catch at some gilded prize, some meteor gay,
And, having touch'd it—drop!

"Thus void of certain aim, not straying wide,
Perplex'd, not lost, I take my dubious way.
And wilt not thou a friendly arm extend
To point my footsteps, and with cheering voice
Exhort to stedfast march and bold advance?
Long, in the prime of manhood, side by side
We ran, and joy'd to give the mutual hand
In paths obscure and rugged:—sever'd now

> I miss the dear companion of my road,
> And wander lonely. Yet, what Fate allows,
> Let me not want;—the frequent words of love,
> The prudent counsel, admonition kind,
> And all the free o'erflowings of the soul,
> In letter'd intercourse;—and, sometimes, too,
> More valu'd, as more rare, the *Friend entire.*

Next to the endearments of domestic affection, which my father ever regarded as the best sweeteners of human life, he continued to prize the resources offered by letters; and in the midst of troubles and anxieties which would have left the majority of men but few spare thoughts at their disposal, he found in himself energy to plan and execute for the public more than one literary labor. The first of these, indeed, sprung from an imperious sense of duty towards the memory of a man whom he revered perhaps beyond all others. In the summer of 1789, almost immediately after the completion of the work on Lazarettos, in the composition of which Dr. Aikin had assisted him, the excellent Mr. Howard, whose sense of public duty was not to be satisfied with the inconveniences, toils, and perils which he had already confronted in the cause of humanity, set out on a new mission, which he proposed to render longer than any of his previous ones; for besides revisiting Turkey, Russia, and some other countries, it was his intention to extend his tour into the East.

He passed through Holland and the north of Germany to Petersburgh, thence to Moscow, and thence to Cherson in the Crimea, where a fever, caught in the exercise of some of his acts of benevolence, terminated his high career on January 20th, 1790. When he perceived his end approaching, Mr. Howard delivered his memorandums of the journey in which he was then engaged to the servant who attended him, with a written request that they might be fitted for publication by Dr. Price and Dr. Aikin. The infirm state of health into which Dr. Price had fallen, caused the task to devolve wholly on my father; who, after he obtained possession of the papers from the executors, which was not done without considerable delay and difficulty, lost no time in preparing from them a narrative which was printed as an appendix to the work on Lazarettos.

But this effort was far from fulfilling his earnest desire of doing honor and justice to the memory of so revered and lamented a friend, and so distinguished an ornament not only of his age and country, but of human nature itself. The extraordinary exertions of Mr. Howard had fixed the wonder and admiration of all the countries which he had visited in the performance of his beneficent mission; and in many of these he had not only received from the highest authorities strong

testimonies of personal respect and deference, but, what he valued much more, his opinions had been listened to, his plans and suggestions adopted, and extensive benefit had resulted to the unfortunate objects of his care and protection. At home, his evidence on the subject of prisons had been heard with deep attention by the House of Commons, which had voted him its thanks for his philanthropic exertions, and passed certain acts for the purpose of giving effect to his plans of reform, especially one for the erection of penitentiary houses, under the inspection of three supervisors, of whom he was named the first. But virtue so exalted in its quality, so singular in its mode of operation, and, above all, so conspicuous and so successful, could not be expected to escape the open hostility of selfishness and corruption, the covert insinuations of envy and detraction, or the misrepresentations of vulgar credulity; and no sooner was it known that he was finally removed from the scene, than a thousand absurd or malevolent reports which had hitherto circulated in conversation alone, found their way into magazines and newspapers, and perplexed or prejudiced the public judgement. It was important to rescue the memory of such a man from injury by a just statement of his actions and motives; and with respect to his public life and

services, no one could be accounted better qualified to give such a statement, than one who had been selected by himself to assist in the composition of his works, and had enjoyed during many years the benefit of so much confidential discourse with him on his favorite objects. Accordingly, Dr. Aikin was strongly urged both by Mr. Howard's friends and his own, to undertake the office of his biographer, and their entreaties were powerfully seconded by the promptings of his own mind. But the unaccountable hostility to this excellent person's memory exhibited by his nearest kinsman, who was his heir and one of his executors, opposed obstacles to the obtainment of proper materials for a history of the earlier and more private part of his life, which it appeared difficult to overcome; especially as Dr. Aikin's place of residence cut him off from opportunities of personal intercourse with the persons best informed in these particulars. At length however these difficulties were overcome, by the zealous assistance of Mr. Howard's real friends, and in 1792 Dr. Aikin published, in a small octavo volume, "*A View of the Character and Public Services of the late John Howard, Esq. LL.D. F.R.S.*" This work comprises a full account of the events of Mr. Howard's life, of the origin and progress of his inquiries into the state of prisons, hospitals,

and lazarettos; and of his travels in pursuit of his peculiar objects; interspersed with a copious analysis of his various publications. It concludes with a view of his character interspersed with illustrative anecdotes, somewhat in the style of those very agreeable pieces, the French *Eloges*. The strongly marked features of Mr. Howard's character, the extraordinary nature of his exertions, as well as the loftiness and purity of the principles and motives from which they sprung, and the deep feeling of his subject evinced by his biographer, all conspire to impart a deep and peculiar interest to this piece; and at the present day, when the subject of prison discipline, to which Mr. Howard was the first to draw the attention of the public, has called forth the benevolent efforts of so many fellow-laborers in the cause of humanity, it seems likely to meet with more general acceptance than at the period of its publication.

A few months previously to the appearance of his life of Mr. Howard, Dr. Aikin printed a small volume of Poems, partly original, partly translations or imitations; none of these pieces are of considerable length, and their topics are very various. Those of the number are in all respects the best, which bear a reference to the actual circumstances of the writer, and express his own

feelings and habitual trains of thought. Three of these, Horatian Philosophy, the Epistle to Mrs. Barbauld, and that to Dr. Enfield, have been inserted in the present memoir, under the years in which they were composed; and as the volume was never reprinted, I shall not scruple to avail myself somewhat further of its contents. The spirit of liberty is the pervading soul of a large proportion of the pieces; and the author, fully resolved to assert at all hazards the right of expressing the opinions which he had deliberately formed, ventured to prefix to the collection a *Counter-remonstrance*, in answer to the prudential representations of friends, some passages of which are too characteristic of the author to be omitted.

* * * * * * * *

"What want I in life to be bought at the price
Of courting proud folly or crouching to vice?
What is there should tempt me my freedom to barter,
Or a tittle to bate of an Englishman's charter?

Shall the mind that has drawn from the poet and sage
Some share of the nurture of ev'ry fair age,
Shrink back with false shame, or be dazzled with awe,
When weakness or prejudice lays down the law?

The first rights of nature when tyrants invade,
And freedom and justice aloud call for aid,
Unmov'd at the voice shall I stupidly stand
Or raise in the conflict a timorous hand?

O never must cold-hearted selfishness know
The noble delights of a generous glow,
The triumphant emotions that swell in the mind
When Reason and Truth gain the cause for mankind.

From the taste of these joys shall I meanly stoop down
And deaden my heart with the fear of a frown;
Weigh a sentiment's worth with the chance of a fee,
And throw in the scale,—'Why 'tis nothing to me?'

Is it nought to be lord of a liberal breast;
Is Truth a mere phantom, and Freedom a jest?"

* * * * * * *

The notices of his feelings and opinions contained in his private correspondence are entirely conformable to the manly sentiments which he thus courageously avowed to the world; and I shall here offer a few miscellaneous extracts from letters written in the years 1790 and 1791.

Many traces appear, in different parts of his works, of a desire to correct that blind admiration of which Dr. Johnson was for a considerable time the object, and the following judgement of his character is expressed to Mrs. Barbauld:

"He had not, indeed, a grain of the noble enthusiasm, the calm simplicity, the elevated purpose of a *great man*. His temper, habits, and system equally disqualified him from attaining that character. He was able with great accuracy to compare every literary and moral idea with the

standards in his own mind, and to detect all false pretensions within his own compass. But there were heights in both to which he could not ascend. His *life* fell far short of his writings, and his faults and asperities were rather aggravated than softened by age."

That remarkable character Mr. Thomas Day, author of Sandford and Merton, calls forth these reflections:

"We have just read with pleasure Keir's Life of Mr. Day. Nothing deserves our admiration so much as these characters of *principle*. To be *amiable*, only requires good nature and indifference. Weakness has a better chance for it than virtue. What this age wants are, I am sure, examples of firmness and consistency; the friends of liberty particularly should say to themselves, *in ea tempora natus est, quibus firmare animum expediat constantibus exemplis.*"

In a letter referring to Mrs. Barbauld's admirable poetical Epistle to Mr. Wilberforce, on his efforts for the abolition of the slave trade, which, for the time, had been frustrated of success; his ardent attachment to the great interests of society thus breaks forth:

"How little, how contemptible, do all the petty pursuits of philology appear, to the great concerns relative to man and his first interests which are

transacting at this instant, before our eyes, and in which we are all invited to share! If Solon condemned the man who should remain neuter in the little party disputes of his country, what must be thought of him who through timidity or indifference refuses to take part in questions that are to decide the future condition perhaps of all mankind?"

Some of those readers whose memory contains the stores of not less than thirty years, will be able to call to mind, that among the measures adopted by the first zealous petitioners for the abolition of the slave trade, was that of persuading individuals to abstain, as a matter of conscience, from the consumption of sugar, and all other West Indian produce raised by the labor of slaves. To those who had studied mankind beyond the limits of small and peculiar sects, it was obvious, that this renunciation would never become sufficiently prevalent to produce any sensible effect on the demand for commodities of such general use; and on this ground of inutility alone, Dr. Aikin refused for a time to concur in this point with the persons around him. His change of opinion is thus related to his sister:

"I am at length become a practical *antisaccharist*. I could not continue to be the only person in the family who used a luxury which grew

less and less *sweet* from the reflections mingled with it. I do not in this matter look to *effects*. They are in the hands of Providence, and I neither expect nor despair about them. I resign the use of sugar, merely on the conviction that, feeling as I do about the mode in which it is procured, I cannot justify the use of it to myself. It is a personal affair to me, and I neither feel a desire to make converts, nor trouble myself about consequences. The sacrifice I find less than I expected,—it is indeed almost too little to make to principle, with the idea of merit. I know not whether mere economy might not do as much. But with respect to the young people, and even *children*, who have entirely on their own accord resigned an indulgence important to them, I triumph and admire! Nothing is to be despaired of, if *many* of the rising generation are capable of such conduct."

The sentiments in his letters to Dr. Haygarth during this period are equally spirited; indeed it rather appears that his friend's avowed difference of opinion on public affairs lent additional force to his expressions; and even the professional topics which always occupied a considerable share of their correspondence, are occasionally enlivened with strokes of Opposition politics—as in the following instance; where the writer will

also be found to have touched upon abuses which have since undergone much pointed remark from various quarters, and exercised the investigation of a parliamentary committee.

"The absurdity of the quarantine of persons in this country is inconceivable. Sir Charles Knowles, a naval officer here, tells me, that coming once from the Levant, he touched at Plymouth and there went on shore and called on several people: afterwards, on taking his ship to Portsmouth, he was obliged to perform quarantine. He says he once knew a gentleman called out of the Opera-house to go on board his ship for a quarantine. Such absurdities cannot exist among Hottentots and Cherokees. But we have as bad in various departments. Indeed, indeed, my friend, this wise and enlightened nation wants a thorough reform in almost all its institutions, and they are its worst enemies who *coax* it into an idea of its consummate good sense and knowledge. You are one of the greatest *innovators* I know, and I honor you for it."

In a letter dated in December 1790, he thus pours forth his whole mind to his friend:

"So, my good friend, though you make strokes at me about interference in politics, you could not refrain from indulging that triumph respecting Mr. Burke's performance which fills the

breasts of nine-tenths of the people of England. Who would think this to have been the country of the Sidneys, Lockes, &c. when an oratorical effusion is able to bring about that wonderful conviction and uniformity of opinion which is only to be expected upon a *new* subject scarcely ever before written or thought about? But, in fact, the political feeling of many has never gone further than to compare all other forms of government with the British Constitution, and assign them their merits and demerits in exact proportion to their approach to, or departure from, that all-perfect model. I certainly do not agree with you in thinking that a folio is necessary in reply to Mr. Burke; for setting aside what in him is unanswerable, and what is not worth answering, and being content to *admire* that unequalled flow of wit and brilliancy which is no subject for an answer, his false principles and distorted reasonings will not I think require many pages to expose them at the bar of good sense. I assure you, however, that *I* have had no thoughts of engaging with this Achilles, nor do my present studies or occupations lie in the political way. I am, in fact, doing nothing but amusing myself, and a part of that amusement is the publication of a few poems, which I suppose will soon appear. There, indeed, you will see what I *think* upon politics,

and how boldly I dare tell my thoughts. In short, *jacta est alea.* At my age it would be trifling not to have a *character*, and cowardly not to avow and stick to it. Nor do I think it will be much at the expense of that regard to my *family* which you justly think (at least in my condition) the first of duties. If I remain content to pace in the limited circle in which I now move, it is probable I may continue to do so notwithstanding a few political squabbles. But if ambition should ever lead me into a new field, my success must depend upon such connexions and supports as such a conduct will not be unfavorable to. But, believe me, this is no consideration of mine. I feel a *pleasure* in acting a manly independent part which is superior to any thing increased opulence could give; and I know not why I should wish a different kind of happiness for my family than for myself. My dear friend, though we differ in many things, yet I am sure we agree in loving our families, and in valuing principles of honor and integrity. The account you give of your domestic happiness is highly pleasing to me. May it continually increase! I am glad, too, that your thoughts and labors in the prevention of the small pox are again to appear, in a new form. Any services I can do in this, or any thing else, are at your command. . . . . Can you

suggest any close, fagging employment for my pen in the medical way?"

Meanwhile his situation at Yarmouth was becoming daily more disagreeable to him, and in every respect less worth his keeping. On the other hand, rather encouraging answers had been returned to the inquiries which he had authorised some of his nearest connexions to make respecting the probability of his medical success in London; and after making a hasty journey thither for the purpose of examining the ground with his own eyes, he finally resolved on removing with his family early in the year 1792. The last letter written by him to his friend from Yarmouth, thus explains his feelings and prospects at this important juncture of his history:

"It gives me great satisfaction, my dear friend, that you, as well as all my other friends and well-wishers, approve the important step I am going to take. Though in my temper I am neither sanguine nor ambitious, I cannot but look forward with some pleasing expectations to a change in situation which will make life more valuable to me, and enlarge the sphere of my activity in various ways. Indeed, even had I not been a victim to party bigotry in this place, a removal would have been on many accounts desirable, and principally on account of the want of stimulus, and

indifference to every thing which was creeping on me. It was this, perhaps, which precipitated me into controversy by way of relief from insipidity; and if I have suffered in some respects from my meddling, I think it has done me good in others. Do not suppose, however, that I go to London on the plan of plunging again into party contests, or making myself the hero of a cause. Whatever violence may be imagined deducible from my principles, my temper, believe me, is as moderate as ever. The strong impulse is over, and I shall henceforth do little more than bestow my warm wishes on what I deliberately think the interest of truth and mankind. I have, it is true, felt somewhat too much on some of the late great events of the world; and if the fair fabric of French liberty is after all to sink in blood, and tyranny and priest-craft again to assume the sway, I shall scarcely be able to bear the disappointment with perfect tranquillity. But, on the whole, it is my resolution to attend chiefly to my own concerns, and become as selfish and bustling as my *best friends* can wish. So much for my sect of philosophy! Now to the state of my affairs. . . . .

"I have nothing now to keep me here but the want of a house in London; and in order to expedite this matter, I mean again to run to town

in about a week, where I shall stay till I have suited myself, and then only come down again to bid farewell and wind up my little concerns. My situation in town I mean to fix in the *city*, where my friends chiefly reside, and if possible towards the Hackney side, as I shall have various connexions there. I shall practise as a physician only. At present I have no thoughts of giving lectures, as that can only be done to advantage with a hospital. I mean to employ all my leisure in my *Medical Biography*, in which I am again seriously interested, and for which I can there easily procure every necessary aid. I have already completely analysed various works; among the rest all Willis's; and I am quite of your opinion, that a full view of the progress of medical doctrines and practice is the *most* (or rather the *only*) important part of my design. A few literary schemes besides may have their place. .....

"I do indeed rejoice that I shall be somewhat nearer you, and at the grand centre of attraction, which some time or other extends its influence to every body (who is *any body*) in the kingdom."

In pursuance of the plans here indicated, Dr. Aikin took a house in Broad Street Buildings, in which he assembled his family in the spring of 1792, and commenced his career in the

capacity of a London physician. Many circumstances conspired to render the opening of this new scene of life auspicious and agreeable. The near and dear connexions whom he had quitted with regret six years before, and to whom he seemed to be returning from a tedious exile, received him and his with open arms; and Mr. and Mrs. Barbauld, now settled at Hampstead, were added to the number. The common attraction of the metropolis had also brought within its sphere several old and valued friends from whom he had long been separated; especially Dr. Priestley and Mr. Wakefield, who were at this time resident at Hackney and engaged as tutors in the new dissenting college there, which had been established as a successor to the Warrington one; and in which Dr. Aikin's eldest son was now a student. Many of the friends of civil and religious liberty, who regarded him as a kind of confessor in the cause, welcomed him with cordiality, and his literary character served him as a passport in other quarters. There was reason to hope under these circumstances that his professional success would ultimately correspond with his wishes; the characteristic moderation of which had undergone no change from his change of situation, as the first letter which he addressed to Dr. Haygarth from London abundantly proves.

"I have got access to a very capital medical library, particularly rich in English medical authors, Dr. Sims's. It will be my own fault if I do not find employment there for all my leisure, for a long time; and be assured that I find much more satisfaction in such employment than in any of the topics by which the world is at present agitated. Still, I know that even *that* is not what ought chiefly to engage me in the situation I now occupy, but rather the great and intricate science of pushing one's way in a crowd. Yet what man of forty-five can cast his part anew in life,—and after mediocrity and literary leisure have been my darling objects so long, how can I ever change them for their opposites? Believe me, not all the splendor I see daily passing before my eyes, has in the least impaired my relish for a book, a domestic fireside, and the society of two or three selected friends; and all my desires are limited to the ability of enjoying them with security, and transmitting similar blessings to my children."

His views and prospects, as well as the literary undertakings with which he occupied his leisure, are further explained in a letter to the same friend a few months afterwards.

"In answer to your inquiries about me, I am to acquaint you that my professional employment,

like the fame of Marcellus, "*crescit occulto velut arbor ævo.*" It is, I think, silently creeping forwards, with little chance ever to break out into splendor, but, I hope, with a reasonable prospect of answering my moderate expectations *in time.* It appears to me that in London, as every where else, it is a man's business to avail himself of his own *peculiar* advantages, and to push on in the way nature and fortune seem to point out to him in particular. Now, my situation here is that of a person not void of friends and family connections, of a certain standing and known character, and therefore without the need (as I am sure I am without the talent) of puffing and elbowing like a young unknown adventurer. Our old friend Dr. Fothergill used to say, that he got forwards by doing what business he had to do, as well as ever he could. This is the kind of policy that best suits me. To be attentive, obliging, discreet, and to take all proper opportunities of displaying such talents as I may possess fitted to inspire esteem, are the only modes that my temper will let me practise, and I believe the state of public opinion is not so bad that in the long run they will not answer. Meantime, my known engagements in medical study and writing answer the purpose of giving me professional reputation among my brethren; I take sufficient care to make known

my pursuit of medical biography, and have had several books out of the college library, as well as from private collections. All these I fairly analyse, and am daily adding to my stores of this kind; for my plan is now as full as you would wish it, as to giving a view of the opinions and practice of our medical authors. With respect to acquaintances among the faculty, I have made several slight ones, but none intimate. My old master Dr. Garthshore takes a good deal of notice of me, and at his weekly *conversaziones* I have met with more medical and literary persons than any where else. I am no frequenter of coffee houses, those in the city being the resort chiefly of humdrum politicians; but I belong to a club or two of select men, and I take all opportunities of becoming acquainted with eminent persons in every line.

I am engaged with a few literary persons in a plan of a monthly publication, the purpose of which is to give an account of all *memoirs* printed by the learned societies both at home and abroad. We mean to afford by it full information of every thing new that is going forward in science and the arts, and do not doubt, if we perform our task properly, of making it a very useful work. We shall publish our first number in January

next. My share will be chiefly the medical and natural history departments.

"As to the horrible events that are now going on in the political world, what can I say, but that I feel them as acutely as you can do? But we live to little purpose, unless we accustom ourselves to look through *effects* to their *causes;* and as in this case I think the whole mischief imputable to the accursed spirit of military despotism, my resentment against tyranny is but the more inflamed on account of the discredit thrown by its means on the cause of liberty and mankind. 'Tis a strange world;—my hopes fail, but not my wishes."

Respecting the literary undertakings here referred to, the reader is already apprized that discouragements of various kinds intercepted the continuation of the *Medical Biography.* The periodical work appeared under the title of *Memoirs of Science and the Arts;* but was after a time discontinued, from causes of failure with which I am not acquainted.

The critical essay on the poems of Goldsmith, reprinted in the present collection, was composed in this year, and my father also produced, in conjunction with his sister, the first volume of *Evenings at Home*—the most popular, perhaps, of all

his works, and one of the most meritorious;—for how can genius, knowledge, and virtue be occupied with greater certainty of producing good than in pouring their treasures upon the mind of youth?

The volumes of this work appeared successively during several subsequent years, and amounted at length to six; Mrs. Barbauld contributing in the whole about half a volume to the collection, and my father supplying the rest.

It is a miscellaneous collection of tales, fables, and dialogues, interspersed with some short pieces of verse; the subjects are extremely various, and there is no arrangement or classification of the pieces. With this apparent desultoriness, however, no work for the use of young people ever had more serious or more definite objects in view; and to an intelligent reader of mature age, its attentive perusal would disclose the whole theory and practice of the author, as far as education is concerned; besides affording notices of his opinions on many highly important topics; and conveying a correct and lively impression of his temper and feelings, and his manner of living and conversing with his children in the bosom of their home.

For the information and amusement of those happy children, indeed, many of the pieces were

originally composed by him; and in one form or other they had received the substance of most of them;—for in the midst of all his studies and various occupations, he constantly discharged, in the most assiduous as well as engaging manner, the offices of parental instruction;—all his children were occasionally under his own tuition; but the two younger ones were educated entirely at home, by himself and their exemplary mother.

The whole of *Evenings at Home* may be regarded as a commentary upon his two favorite ideas—of teaching *things* rather than *words;* and of early presenting to the mind capacious and diversified views of the great empire of knowledge. The work contains a good deal of the natural history, both of animals and plants, not detailed in the dry mode of systematic compendiums, but animated and enriched with bold and striking sketches of the dwellings and manners of the living tribes, and of the general appearance and habits, and principal utilities of the vegetable families. Some elements of chemistry and mineralogy are taught on a similar plan, and much incidental information is conveyed on manufactures and the useful arts. Other pieces relate to *man*, in various views of his state and character. The tales and little dramas, which exhibit great fertility and happiness of invention, and in some

instances a melting tenderness truly characteristic of the author's heart, have the usual purpose of such stories, of combining moral instruction with entertainment: but the morality which they inculcate is not that of children merely, but of men and of citizens; it is lofty, but not visionary, correct, yet glowing; it forms the mind to discrimination, while it engages the youthful feelings in the cause of truth, of freedom, and of virtue.

The state of public affairs during the disastrous year 1793, could excite none but painful emotions in the bosom of any lover of his country, and of true liberty. How deeply it wounded the tranquillity of Dr. Aikin, will best appear from his unreserved correspondence with his dearest friends. In the month of June he thus writes to one of the number:

"..... I have found myself so little better acquainted with the interesting events that are passing, here at London, than you are at K., that I could not think them worth making the subject of a letter to you,—especially as their tenor can afford no pleasing matter for speculation. We are fairly immersed in a bloody, expensive, and I think, unjust war, and we must either lament its success, or rejoice in the calamities of our country. Such an alternative is enough to make one draw off entirely from political discussion, and I

do it, as much as the occasional effervescence of *libera indignatio* will give me leave. I am obliged to those of my friends who wish for the sake of my interest to reduce me *quite* to the state of a *mutum pecus;* but at forty-six if a man has not found out what conduces to his happiness, and has not acquired prudence to pursue it, I am sure little can be done by friends troubling themselves about him. Meantime, I doubt not but any part I may have taken in polities has been greatly exaggerated to those friends..... I belong to no political society whatever. I keep company, it is true, with persons of well-known sentiments, who happen also to be some of my best friends, and I am not afraid in *private* companies of speaking without disguise. But these things I shall do at all hazards."

With another friend he thus expostulates:

"I thank you for your caution, which I know proceeds from true kindness..... Seriously, however, my dear friend, I wish *you* for a moment to reflect, what must the state of public opinion in this country be, when expressing an abhorrence of hypocrisy and tyranny is to be called maintaining *French principles*, and is to subject a man to be treated like a foe to the human race! I know not what prospect of public danger may haunt *your* mind, but *I* can foresee no possible event

worse than the conversion of Englishmen into persecutors and slaves. If persons of reading and reflection are hurried along with this torrent of false opinion, what is left on which to found a hope of saving us from the lowest degradation?"

Towards the close of the year he thus again opens himself to his first correspondent:

"With this parcel I send for your dear H. a third volume of *Evenings at Home*, and for yourself my *Letters*, just fresh from the press, and not yet published. Your free and full judgement concerning them will give me much satisfaction, as it is a judgement in which experience has made me confide. I cannot expect that my opinions on such a variety of topics will meet the perfect concurrence of perhaps a single reader; but if those of whom I think well shall approve their general spirit, and particularly if they see nothing objectionable in the *manner* in which my notions are offered, I shall not repent that I have sent them forth into the world.....

"The confinement of Muir and Palmer in the hulks is an example of tyranny scarcely, I think, legal, certainly not decent. It has produced here much emotion, though perhaps only in the breasts of those who before were enemies to the present system. Several persons of respectable situation

and character have been to visit them, and they are as well treated as such a situation will permit.

"There is no doubt that we shall have another campaign, though when Mr. Pitt comes with his demand of twenty millions (as I understand he will), it may cause some blank looks among the *country gentlemen*. They are to be told, however, that every thing is at stake,—that their property and very existence depend upon the event;—and truly I begin almost to think that it does; though to me it is evident that this desperate state, with respect to ourselves, is of our own bringing on.

"The condition of France becomes every day more extraordinary;—a country without religion, without laws, without settled government, yet from individual ardor and enthusiasm capable of the most surprising and regular exertions, and never more formidable to its foes than at this moment. A very moderate degree of superstition would make one hunt through old prophecies to find a clue to events otherwise inscrutable, and many minds seem at present to look that way. It is however, perhaps, no superstition to suppose that this wonderful impetus, seemingly governed by no human principles, is an instrument in the hands of the Deity by which he means to effect some great purposes of overturning sy-

stems which cool reason is unable to master. And yet—I know not if the past experience of the world will authorise such notions of Divine Providence. All is doubt and darkness! If we live to see the end, we shall be somewhat enlightened.

".....Pray bear up against all the plagues of your profession. What profession is without them? You have a good (an uncommon) stock of merit of every kind to trust to. It cannot fail of insuring you at least a tolerable share of success. Enjoy the world as it goes, if you can. These are times in which long-sighted wisdom is arrant folly."

Soon after he thus writes to Dr. Haygarth:

"Have you heard of the institution of a Literary and Philosophical society here? It was first thought of by Dr. Priestley, and a few friends joined him to set it a-going. They made me secretary. We are now near thirty members, several of them names well known in science and literature. We meet once a fortnight, and either converse or read papers as it happens; but we are only organizing as yet, and have done little. Our friend W. is a member. But our founder, alas! is going to leave us. This month will separate him from his native land, probably for ever. It throws a gloom over my mind which I

cannot express. I will not rail or declaim on the occasion,—I only deeply lament.

"..... I feel as I ought your kind admonition to political prudence; but too many years have gone to form my character and principles to admit of an easy change, nor can I find motives to make me renounce the greatest pleasure of my life, that of keeping the company I like, and speaking my mind. My *Letters* will show whether I am disposed to use this liberty immoderately. I shall be glad at your leisure to be fairly told how the sentiments in them appear to *you*."

The *Letters* here referred to, formed the first volume of a work entitled *Letters from a Father to his Son on various topics relative to literature and the conduct of life*, which appeared at the beginning of the year 1794, and which here requires a somewhat extended notice, as the most original, and in several respects the most important performance of its author.

Of the thirty letters of which this volume is composed, about one third are on subjects of taste and literature; the rest relate principally to points connected with morals and the conduct of life. As the son to whom they were addressed had already completed his education, and was entering upon the duties of a profession, the topics discussed, as well as the manner of treating them,

are adapted to the state of manhood, and it would be an error to regard the work as an elementary one. The author himself, in the valedictory letter, desires his son to regard them as *supplementary* to the systematic instructions which he had received from books and lectures. "Of such instructions," he adds, "it was the chief purpose to establish *principles*,—a point of most essential consequence, which I hope and believe has been sufficiently secured in your education. My view in writing was rather to place in a strong and familiar light some subordinate truths belonging to the experimental practice of life, which, though not of the fundamental importance of the former, yet are of no small weight in promoting a man's happiness and utility. With respect to the letters relative to points of taste and literature, it has been their chief aim to obviate prejudices, and to give that turn to your thoughts which might enable you to judge and enjoy for yourself, without first appealing to the decision of a dictator. For freedom of thinking is the same thing in matters of greater and of smaller moment; and though I hold it of little consequence *how* a person is pleased, provided he be innocently so, yet I would not wish him, even in his pleasures, implicitly to follow the decrees of custom and authority, lest it should induce the same habit of

passive compliance in affairs of capital importance." The general purpose here avowed is closely adhered to in the work, and it is interesting to observe the mode in which the discussion of a great variety and diversity of subjects is rendered subservient to its accomplishment. Two letters on *Attachment to the Ancients*, explain with sagacity and perspicuity the sources of the prejudices entertained on this subject, and suggest principles for distinguishing the intrinsic from the adventitious value of the literature of remote ages; Pope's *Essay on Criticism* undergoes free examination in another letter. That on *Nature and Art, and the Love of Novelty*, cautions against the exclusive spirit of the modern English school of taste; and the subject is further pursued in the letter on *Ornamental Gardening*, while that on *Ruins* examines another object of fashionable admiration. Two letters, on *Classification in Natural History*, and on *Buffon's Natural History*, open general views of the philosophy of this branch of science, and caution against a blind and exclusive attachment to the system of either the Swedish or the French interpreter of nature.

The letters on moral subjects appear to me to possess yet higher interest, and they inculcate still more impressively the free employment of reason in the investigation of truth. That on *Strength of Cha-*

racter details the result of his own experience of life. In the early part of it, he says, that he pleased himself with thinking that he had not an enemy in the world; and that in fact a too great facility in giving up his own interest where it involved points of contention, and the habit of at least not opposing the opinions which he heard, had conciliated for him the *passive* regard of most of his acquaintance. But that no sooner did altered views and greater firmness of character incite him to an open declaration on important points, than he found that he must be content to exchange his former source of satisfaction for the *esteem* of a few; and notwithstanding the concern which he had felt from the estrangement of some who had renounced private friendship with him on public grounds, he concludes by decidedly advising his son not to be intimidated from openly espousing the cause he thinks a right one, by the apprehension of any man's displeasure.

The three letters *On the Pursuit of Improvement*, *On the Inequality of Conditions*, and *On the Prevalence of Truth*, unfold his views respecting the deductions to be made from the present condition of mankind relative to the real character and destiny of the species; and the hopes to be entertained of a progressive melioration of the state of the world. These are among his best

pieces of reasoning, and those which most entitle him to the character of a philosopher; but the practical wisdom of those on *Cheap Pleasures* and on *Independence*, in which the writer speaks with all the authority of personal experience, has perhaps obtained for them the suffrages of a larger class of readers; while that on *Consolation* will be esteemed by all who knew him as one of the most precious records of his mind and heart.

Of the remaining letters contained in this volume, nearly the whole are referable to one or other of the classes already indicated and partake the same characteristics; and none of them appear to call for any particular remarks except that on the *Choice of a Wife*. In this piece, the author's ideas of the perfection of female character are strongly expressed; and I wish particularly to invite attention to them, because he always appeared to me the sincerest friend of the female sex that I have ever known. After stating the two main points on which the happiness to be expected from a female associate in life must depend, to be,—"her qualifications as a companion, and as a helper;" and enforcing this idea from various considerations, he thus concludes:

"I confess myself decidedly of the opinion of those who would rather form the two sexes to a resemblance of character, than contrast them.

Virtue, wisdom, presence of mind, patience, vigor, capacity, application, are not *sexual* qualities; they belong to mankind,—to all who have duties to perform and evils to endure. It is surely a most degrading idea of the female sex, that they must owe their influence to trick and finesse, to counterfeit or real weakness. They are too essential to our happiness to need such arts; too much of the pleasure and of the business of the world depends upon them, to give reason for apprehension that we shall cease to join partnership with them. Let them aim at excelling in the qualities peculiarly adapted to the parts they have to act, and they may be excused from affected languor and coquetry. We shall not think them less amiable for being our best helpers."

To this I may add, that the view which he took of women as the *companions*, contradistinguished from the *playthings*, of men, and the opinion which he often inculcated, that the talent of conversation was the first of all social accomplishments, led him to encourage females in the pursuit of every kind of acquirement capable of contributing to the enjoyments of cultivated society. Education indeed, in both sexes equally, he regarded as the process of preparing a human being to fulfil duties and to enjoy and impart happiness; and he opposed, with respect to both, the practice of

occupying a large portion of the period of instruction in the acquisition of branches of learning totally alien from what were likely to be the objects and pursuits of maturer life. But whatever kind of knowledge promised to be a *permanent* source of advantage worldly or moral, or of innocent and respectable amusement, he wished to be freely imparted to women as well as men; nor did I ever hear him express a doubt of their capacity for excelling in any branch of literature or science. He loved female talent, and always treated its possessors with distinguished respect and kindness.

The degree of freedom in thought and expression assumed in these Letters, appears to have been, on the whole, not uncongenial to the feelings of the great body of readers;—they were received with general favor, and a second edition was called for within the year.

It has already been observed, that Dr. Aikin had early displayed a fondness for topographical pursuits. This taste had led him, during his residence at Warrington, to issue proposals for a History of Lancashire: the scheme had dropped at that time for want of sufficient support and co-operation; but the preparations which he had then made for carrying it into execution recommended and facilitated to him the performance of a some-

what similar task in which he now engaged. This was a *Description of the country from thirty to forty miles round Manchester.* The materials for this book were to be collected by Mr. Stockdale, the proprietor, and the arrangement of them, and the composition of the work, were alone undertaken by Dr. Aikin; but in fact it was from his exertions and the communications of his personal friends in that part of the country, that the most valuable portion of the matter proceeded; without which the performance would have been defective indeed. This work appeared in 1795, in one large volume quarto, illustrated with many maps and plates. The local knowledge of the writer has lent great clearness and animation to the geographical description which it contains; while the simple elegance of the style, the good sense of the remarks, and the absence of vulgar prejudices and partialities, strongly distinguish it, as a whole, among the works on English topography.

"Employment I must have, or I should die of thinking in a month," said Dr. Aikin in a letter to a friend written about this time. Such was the force of his honest heart-aches, during the period of the reign of terror in France and the crusade against all free principles of government preached up by Mr. Burke in England, and resounded throughout the monarchies of Europe! For him-

self, individually, he was ever prompt to own, with pious gratitude, the preponderance of enjoyment in his lot of life ;—and though a temper the reverse of sanguine cut him off from those brilliant anticipations of future good which are in themselves a kind of bliss, the boundedness of his wishes and a modest confidence in his resources, blunted the edge of worldly disappointments, and always armed him against despondency. The declaration in question appears by the context to have been employed by him as a plea for occupying in literary labors the abundant leisure afforded him by a professional progress which promised to be steady rather than rapid ; and which, in the opinion of some of his friends, might be impeded by his avowed attachment to pursuits perhaps more congenial to his inclinations. In fact, his pen was scarcely ever more occupied, or on a greater variety of subjects, than during the year 1794.

The History of Manchester employed a considerable portion of his time; and besides completing this work, he composed a fourth volume of *Evenings at Home* and a critical Essay on *Armstrong's Art of preserving Health*,—wrote a good deal for the *Memoirs of Science and the Arts*, prepared new editions of his *England Delineated*, and of his *Letters*,—wrote a life of his old, re-

spected friend, Dr. Fothergill, for Dr. Kippis's new edition of the *Biographia Britannica*[a], and selected a small volume of observations in natural history, under the title of the *Naturalist's Calendar*, from the papers of the Rev. Mr. White of Selborne; designed as a sequel to that most delightful miscellany of observations on different parts of nature, the *History of Selborne*. Other objects of his attention are disclosed in the following extracts from his letters to his medical friend. After lamenting "the neglect which, in the present state of things, must fall upon all objects of general utility; when the fate of a fortress in Flanders occupies the public attention more than the welfare of half the world, and killing ten thousand French is thought of more consequence than saving ten times the number of English,"—he thus proceeds:

"Every body seems to agree that the times are peculiarly unfavorable to literary undertakings of all kinds, and one may see that even those which occupy a good deal of notice for a few weeks, are soon completely forgotten. I do not find that the medical world are at present occupied in any particular novelties. The project of curing

[a] Only one volume of this edition was printed, which did not comprise Fothergill, and I am unable to recover the article.

diseases by artificial airs has caused a little discussion, but does not seem to excite much expectation. Animal electricity has furnished some food for the physiologists, but I believe will not end in the discovery of any new law of nature. Many of the faculty here have been disposed of by appointments to military service, and some of the charitable institutions have of course had vacancies, but none worth making a stir about. Indeed I see them quitted with indifference by persons who had made great exertions to get in. For myself, I go on quietly in endeavouring to establish a professional reputation among those who compose the little circle of my connections, and I am well content to wait the event with patience.

"I know not whether you have heard of a new attack upon the prerogative of the College of Physicians meditated by some of the *Licentiates*. The idea was brought out some time ago at a meeting of a society of the body, of which I am a member, and an elaborate paper stating the progressive usurpations of the College, and the legal grounds of resisting them, was read, and made a considerable impression upon most present. It was determined, previous to any legal attack, to state the matter to the College in a civil address, claim-

ing our right, on the principles of the original charters, to be admitted to all professional honors on due examination.

"It seems very clear that the idea of confining the right of *fellowship* to graduates of our universities was an after thought, and is incapable of being supported on any principles of equity or propriety. Seeing the thing in this light, I have not scrupled to join my name to the *remonstrants*, though without any personal views, since I should not choose to go like a school-boy to be examined in Greek by my juniors.

"I have no expectation that the College will concede,—for when did any public body voluntarily resign the fruits of their own abuses? and if it comes to a law-suit, the event will be very dubious, since the universities will doubtless support a monopoly in which they are most of all interested. But I think it useful now and then to cite to the bar of *reason* and *fair argument* causes which have nothing better than *power* to support them. This is the only way in which the weak can ever prevail against the strong.

"I know not with what eye you at present view the scenes going on in the world. The impression they make on me is a wish to arrive at a perfect apathy respecting the concerns of that animal called *Man*, any further than as they involve

the interests of my friends; and as to individuals, I have my favorites among cats, dogs and canary birds, for whose sake I have some regard to *their* species. And certainly I know among those animals neither tyrants nor slaves,—neither blood-selling princes nor usurping factions.—Really, it is almost *too much* to reflect on! God bless you, and give you more tranquillity of mind than I possess!"

The contest between the Licentiates and the College of Physicians, excited a keen interest in the mind of Dr. Aikin; which he exhibited by active exertions in behalf of the body to which he belonged. Into this cause, as into the question of the abolition of the Test Act, he entered without any personal interests whatever, but simply from that hatred of every thing unfair and inequitable which was his leading principle and almost his ruling passion. In conformity with his opinion of the utility of citing power to the tribunal of reason, he afterwards took occasion, in the second volume of his *Letters to a Son*, thus to record the proceedings of the College, as an exemplification of the encroaching and usurping spirit of corporate bodies.

"In the reign of Henry VIII. a College of Physicians was constituted in London by charter, for the express purpose of examining and admitting

applicants duly qualified for the practice of physic in the metropolis, and excluding and interdicting quacks and empirics. Some of the first members of this college were foreign graduates; and no condition of having received their education or degrees at any particular place was thought of with respect to them or their successors; nor was any distinction of practitioners into different classes established, but all professional honors were left open to every physician of sufficient learning and good morals. In process of time, however, an innovation was introduced of distinguishing the physicians of London into two classes, fellows of the college and licentiates; the former possessing all the collegiate powers and emoluments, the latter having simply the right of practising. And the same monopolizing spirit produced the further limitation, that no one should be allowed to claim admission to the fellowship of the college, who was not a graduate of Oxford or Cambridge. Such is the state of things at the present day; and this absurd and arrogant exclusion of men whose learning and professional skill may be inferior to those of none of their competitors, is pertinaciously maintained by a body, originally instituted for the sole purpose of the public good, but perverted in its object by the

mean jealousy and selfishness ever attending the *corporation spirit*[a]."

The decision of the Court of King's Bench in favor of the by-laws of the college, by which the claims of the licentiates were finally quashed, always appeared to my father a denial of substantial justice; and he never spoke of the affair without manifest tokens of that bitterness of soul with which acts of wrongfulness and oppression are contemplated by the upright and noble-minded.

After the presentation of the petition of the licentiates to the college for the restoration of their rights, to which the name of Dr. Aikin appeared as one of the subscribers, the officers of that learned corporation were pleased to refuse him the privilege, which he had previously enjoyed, of borrowing books from their library to assist him in the composition of his *Biographical Memoirs of Medicine*,—one of the numerous discouragements which by their united operation proved fatal to the progress of the work!

The following letter to Dr. Haygarth is dated in August 1794:

"As I always feel a pleasure in even a distant communication with one whom I love, I do not delay to answer your last call for a letter; yet in

[a] Letter on Party.

fact I have very few materials of information to make out one. I am plodding at home among books and papers, and the world glides by me, not unmarked indeed, but with very little participation of mine in its motions. Clubs and meetings are suspended during the summer, so that I know little of what is the present object of interest to professional and literary men,—except the universal one, politics.

"The faculty here, as far as I can observe, enter little into speculations that are at all abstracted from immediate utility, and particularly, utility to themselves; and yet surely they are not at all *less* curious or public-spirited than other people. But all public feelings are expended upon the great scenes now acting upon the theatre of the world, and private concerns are pursued with a view to emolument solely.

"The town is very full of reports concerning the destruction of Robespierre and his faction. The main point, I suppose, is true, though probably many of the current circumstances are mere fabrication. Whether this will or will not have much effect on the present state of things, I am unable even to guess. I should rather suppose that the causes of the present wonderful *motus animorum* throughout Europe lie deeper than to be quieted by the death of a few individuals. I

am no believer in prophecies, and do not hunt for future events in the Revelations; but it does appear to me from a cool induction of numerous particulars, that the critical period is arrived for several of the things which have long subsisted in the world. Whether they will survive the crisis, and whether the state of mankind will be made better or worse in the issue, I am unable to divine. I suppose you continue your confidence in the soundness of the old ship *Britannia*, and the skill of her pilot. To say the truth, I scarcely know a stouter ship in Europe, and I can as yet sleep secure in her. Yet she is certainly much worm-eaten and rather overloaded. I wish she was at least well in port."

All the concerns, medical, literary and domestic, of this busy year had prospered; the talents of Dr. Aikin began to be justly appreciated, not only by his friends and by a rather extensive circle of acquaintance, but by the public; and it was in the following strain of content and cheerfulness that he addressed his beloved friend near the commencement of the year 1795:

"I should not have suffered so much of the new year to elapse without expressing to my very dear friend every kind wish for him and his during the course of it, had I not been uncommonly busy with my pen in various ways for some

time past. But having now cleared my ground, I sit down with pleasure to converse a little on private and public topics with one to whom I have so long been accustomed to communicate every sentiment of my heart.

"The year has opened to me with favorable auspices, and I have never felt more easy in my concerns than at present.....As every thing in this world is relative, I think myself almost rich enough, and I feel an independence which perhaps an apparently more prosperous condition would not have afforded. My children are all promising; the two eldest in useful stations, and nearly able to take care of themselves. In short, *I* have no need to look on the other side of the Atlantic for a content which I have so much reason to acknowledge here. Oh, if, in the present state of things, one circumstanced as I am should look more towards the goods he has not than those he has, what moral benefit can be expected from the *home lessons* which every day is bringing forth!

"It is almost impossible at this crisis to write to a friend without saying something about *public* matters. Indeed, they may very soon become the most important of *private* concerns to us also. All other subjects are merged in them; and science and literature are flat and subordinate topics

in all conversations. I *think* I can view the conduct of the different parties with tolerable moderation, and perhaps the great impending events *must* have happened whoever had possession of the helm. Great events may seem to have trifling causes, but, in fact, the cause must be adequate to the effect; and who does not see that the progress of new opinions and manners could not but at length issue in a terrible conflict with the old? Where will it stop? Is there any moral or natural reason to suppose that this island can remain stationary in the midst of a changing world, connected, too, as she is with that world, and dependent upon it for the continuance of a system of commerce now apparently essential to her being? I would not indulge gloomy reflections,—indeed I feel somehow unaccountably callous (like my neighbours) to approaching evils; but can we find any solid ground of hope and comfort? If you have any to suggest, pray communicate it to me. I assure you I am well disposed to think as favorably of futurity as I possibly can. Every body here gives up Holland, and she will not only, in the hands of the French, cease to be an ally, but will be converted into a bitter foe. And where are our friends? Surely it is an awful crisis! such an one as neither we nor our fathers ever knew.

"In the mean time, may you and yours enjoy all those *domestic* blessings which are accumulated around you; and may we, in reciprocal friendship and internal tranquillity, find all possible support under the vicissitudes of mortal things!"

In the month of May he again communicates his sentiments to his friend, thus:

"I should not have suffered your last very kind letter to remain unanswered, had I not lately had so much employment for my pen, especially in *Stockdale's Account of Manchester*, (now nearly finished, and in which you, my friend, are not entirely unrecorded,) that extra-writing became an irksome task.

"You suppose that the sentiments on public affairs contained in your former letter did not please me. I had certainly no right to be *displeased* with them, although they might not perfectly coincide with my own; and as to the advice conveyed in them, it was impossible for me to take it otherwise than as it was meant. It is true, I continue to think that the possible hazards attending the American funds are compensated by their better interest, and by the fundamental stability which I believe them to possess; nor can I think so ill of the principles of their government and their national character, as that, in the event of a war, they would take a step to violate their

faith to individuals which the worst of the old governments in Europe have never done. Some difficulty in getting the interest during that period is all I should apprehend.

"With regard to the present aspect of affairs at home, I believe we do not much differ in our opinions as to matter of fact, however we may as to causes. I fully agree with you in expecting no mischief from sedition and jacobinism in this country. The character of the nation has fully shown itself. None can be more loyal, more attached to ancient institutions, more sensible that it has a great deal to lose. My apprehensions about Ireland are less than yours. I rely on a system of corruption which has pervaded all ranks and orders in that country, for keeping all quiet. They may bluster and talk large, and even break out in the remoter parts into acts of atrocity; but their chains are indissoluble.

"For all this, the prospect of things does not quite please me. I see irresistible power, under the direction, as I think, of little wisdom or honesty, involving us in difficulties and loading us with burthens which in the end must be *sensibly felt*, and that not by politicians and theorists alone. In short, I seriously fear that it will become a country in which a man of moderate resources, and with a family to provide for, *cannot*

live, and then what will signify debating about our constitution? When peace returns, commerce will of course revive, and possibly to a very unexpected degree, as after the American war. But if taxes and dearness of living more than keep pace with it, what can we do, especially those of us who are out of trade, but *sink, sink?* These are forebodings which, without consulting Brothers or Halhed, enter my mind, and, if I had not other things to think of, would make me pass many weary hours. And can you, my friend, suggest any considerations which will make these dangers appear chimerical?

"It gives me pleasure that a *good report* of my professional progress has reached you, as that may be a prelude to its verification. The truth is, I have reason to hope that my medical character does not lose on trial, yet I have not much hitherto to boast of. The business of *pushing into practice* here is an affair so contrary to my nature and habits, that I am convinced I shall ever move in a small circle. The necessary expense of making a figure is a serious matter. A physician well introduced and connected told me the other day, that out of a practice of 500*l.* he was obliged to pay 200*l.* for his carriage, which was indispensably necessary to him. I shall never envy him his carriage the worst day in the year. My *book-*

sellers will never expect me to visit them in my chariot.

" I have lately had the honour of being made a fellow of the Linnæan Society, and also of the Medical Society in Bolt-Court (Lettsom's); but as to this last, I am in some doubt if I shall assume my *blushing* honours."

Besides the completion of the *History of Manchester and the surrounding country*, which appeared in June 1795, the literary labors of Dr. Aikin during this year consisted of the fifth and sixth volumes of *Evenings at Home*, and an *Essay*[a] *on the Poems of Green*, author of the *Spleen*. No one, I believe, of all his critical pieces was composed with greater pleasure in his subject than this. The principal work of this truly original writer, little adapted to the mere lover of elegant verse, had for him a charm which grew upon the intimacy of repeated perusals. While the profusion of uncommon thoughts and witty allusions with which it is studded amused his fancy, the pervading spirit of the whole had much in it to attract his sympathetic approbation. It is that of a philosophy somewhat on the Horatian model, in which habitual serenity of mind is sought by a renunciation of the common objects of ambition, by temperate enjoyments and modest wishes, by

[a] See Vol. ii.

the indulgence of a vein of free speculation, and by a general indifference and neutrality in the disputes which chiefly agitate the world;—with an honorable exception however for

> "——— the righteous cause
> Of a free press and equal laws."

None of the beauties of the author appear to have escaped the eye of the critic; and the easy but clear and lively manner in which they are unfolded to the reader peculiarly recommends the perusal of the entire piece.

The repute which the pen of Dr. Aikin had gained with the public, and the great extension of his connexions among men of letters since his residence in London, now caused literary proposals to flow in upon him on all sides, and the year 1796 was the date of the commencement of more than one of his principal undertakings. The earliest of these was the editorship of the *Monthly Magazine*, his connection with which work peculiar circumstances render it necessary to state fully as well as accurately.

Almost from the commencement of that political division in this country to which the French revolution had given rise, Dr. Aikin had been of opinion that the establishment of a periodical literary miscellany characterized by a spirit of a free inquiry and a general liberality of sentiment, was

an object highly desirable, on account of the many important services which such a work might be made to render to the best interests of society.

In his letters to Mrs. Barbauld during the latter years of his residence at Yarmouth, this topic was frequently recurred to. His remoteness from London necessarily precluded at that time his proposing himself for the conductor of such a design; but he repeatedly mentioned that he was ready to become a principal contributor to it; and that he had already by him several pieces, both of verse and prose, which he would willingly dispose of in this manner. No one however then appeared with spirit to set it on foot, though many had expressed similar wishes and strong persuasion that a work of this nature would succeed.

After his removal to London, so many fresh objects of interest opened upon him, that I imagine he ceased to occupy himself with the idea which had been so long a favorite; but when the plan of the *Monthly Magazine* was disclosed to him by its projector, all his ardor on the subject revived; he closed immediately with the proposal which was made him, and exerted his utmost zeal and diligence in maturing the plan and providing for its due execution.

The part which he took was that of literary

editor. All the original correspondence came under his inspection; articles were inserted or rejected according to his judgement, and the proof sheets underwent his revision. That portion of the work which consisted of compilation from newspapers, as the provincial occurrences and other articles of intelligence, was under the immediate direction of the proprietor; the account of public affairs also was printed without *any participation* of Dr. Aikin's. To provide materials for the Magazine was not strictly a part of his compact;—but the honorable anxiety which he always felt to perform every task committed to him in the best manner possible, and to promote the pleasure and instruction of the public to the utmost of his ability, prompted him, in this, as in many other instances, to go far beyond the letter of his engagement; and besides enriching it to a great extent with his own pieces, he was diligent in his applications to the literary characters with whom he was connected by the ties of friendship; and by means principally of their contributions the new Magazine assumed a rank in letters to which only one of its predecessors had ever ventured to aspire.

On the whole, this editorship, though certainly not unattended with causes of chagrin, was the source of considerable enjoyment to him. It

brought him into habits of occasional intercourse with a great variety of characters, who often exhibited themselves in an instructive or amusing point of view;—it supplied him with a fund of intelligence on all the current topics of the time, which enabled him to turn his own speculations to subjects of general utility and interest; and, what he was far from valuing the least, it afforded him frequent opportunities of becoming the friend and counsellor of youthful genius, of bringing modest talent into notice, and of pointing out resources to merit in distress.

Towards the conclusion of the year, Dr. Aikin, having secured as his coadjutor his beloved friend Dr. Enfield, engaged in the composition of his great work, the *General Biography;* which employed the larger portion of his time during a period of nineteen years, and extended to ten volumes quarto.

The design was not originally his own; but none could have coincided more happily with his talents, his acquirements, or the habits of his mind.

An author will seldom find cause to regret the time and labor which he may have bestowed upon an abortive or unsuccessful work, provided he has applied to it, during its progress, the full force of his mind. Such essays serve to root deeply in

the mind ideas which afterwards spring up with renewed vigor and beauty, and in a more propitious season mature their fruits. Thus it proved in the instance before us.—The efforts which my father had bestowed upon the composition of his *Biographical Memoirs of Medicine*, had obliged him to meditate long and deeply on the subject of biographical writing in general;—to measure the positive and relative merits of the characters who came before him by a scale in his own mind; and to learn the art of conveying, by a few spirited strokes, a clear and lively image of the distinctive features of every individual. What he had thus practised with respect to the professors of a single art in one country alone, he now undertook to exercise on the eminent of many classes in all ages and countries.

In the preface to the work, which was composed with uncommon care and attention, he has given a distinct summary of his own views of the subject; which he will be found unswervingly to have followed; in fact, the principles upon which it is founded are so analogous to his settled habits of judging and feeling, that to those who knew him intimately this piece will appear not so much a prospectus of a book as an ingenuous exposition of his own standard of human greatness; and as such I shall extract some passages from

it[a]. After observing that *selection*, *compass* and *arrangement*, are the three points chiefly to be considered in a biographical dictionary, and briefly stating, under the last head, the advantages of an alphabetical order, he thus proceeds:

"*Selection* is the most important point, and at the same time the most difficult to adjust, in a design of this nature.....In the long lapse of ages, from the first records of history, the names of those who have left behind them some memorials of their existence have become so numerous, that to give an account, however slight, of every person who has obtained temporary distinction in every walk of life, would foil the industry of any writer, as well as the patience of any reader. *Fame*, or *celebrity*, is the grand principle upon which the choice of subjects for a general biography must be founded; for this, on the whole, will be found to coincide with the two chief reasons that make us desirous of information concerning an individual,—curiosity, and the desire of enlarging our knowledge of mankind. But under the general notion of celebrity many subordinate considerations arise.....

"The great affairs of the world are frequently

[a] Rudiments of the same ideas appear in a dialogue contained in *Evenings at Home*, entitled "*Great Men*." Brindley is made an example in both pieces.

conducted by persons who have no other title to distinction than merely as they are associated with these affairs. With abilities not at all superior to those of a clerk in an office, or a subaltern in a regiment, the civil and military concerns of great nations are often managed according to a regular routine, by men whom the chance of birth alone has elevated to high stations. Such characters appear in history with a consequence not really belonging to them; and it seems the duty of a biographer in these cases to detach the man from his station, and either entirely to omit, or reduce to a very slight notice, the memorial of one whose personal qualities had no real influence over the events of his age, and afford nothing to admire or imitate.....

"That interesting class which lays claim to the remembrance of posterity on account of distinction in art, science, or literature, depending solely on personal qualifications and commonly acting individually, might seem to admit of an easier estimate of relative merit than the preceding. But the number of claimants is so great, that in the impossibility of commemorating all, many names must be rejected which on the first glance may seem as worthy of insertion as their preferred rivals. The difficult work of selection ought in these cases to be regulated by some

fixed principles; and the circumstances which appear most worthy of guiding the decision, are those of *invention* and *improvement*.

"None appear to have a more decisive claim to biographical notice than *inventors*; including in the class all who by the exercise of their faculties in an original path have durably added to the stock of valuable products of human skill and ingenuity. Perhaps, in the history of the human mind there is nothing more curious than to trace the operations of an inventive talent working its way, often without any foreign aid, and deriving from its own resources the means of overcoming the successive difficulties which thwart its progress. It is in such a process that the distinguishing powers bestowed upon man are most surprisingly exerted, and that the superiority of one individual over the common mass is most luminously displayed. How much higher, as an intellectual being, does a Brindley rank, directing the complex machinery of a canal, which he himself has invented, than an Alexander at the head of his army! A Newton, who employed the most exquisite powers of invention on the sublimest objects, has attained a point in the scale of mental pre-eminence, which perhaps no known mortal ever surpassed.

"Between invention and *improvement* no precise

line can be drawn. In reality, almost all the great discoveries in art or science have arrived at perfection through the gradual advances given to them by successive improvers, who have exercised a greater or less degree of invention on the subject. When the addition made has been something considerable, the improver seems to have a just title to have his name perpetuated..... The attainment of uncommon excellence in any particular walk, though not attended with what can strictly be called improvement, may be regarded as a just cause for commemoration; since it implies a vigorous exertion of the faculties, and affords animating examples of the power of effecting extraordinary things. Many painters, sculptors, musicians, and other artists of high reputation, come under this head.....

"The class known by the general term of *writers* has presented to us difficulties of selection more embarrassing than any of those hitherto mentioned. It comprehends many whose claims on the biographer are surpassed by none; for where is the celebrity which takes place of a Homer and Virgil, a Livy and Thucydides, a Swift and Voltaire? But from such great names there are all the shades of literary distinction down to the author of a pamphlet; and where must the line be drawn?.....

"Two other circumstances by which selection may be affected are, *country* and *age*. We have seen no general biographical work which is free from a decided stamp of *nationality;* that is, which does not include a greater number of names of natives of the country in which they were composed, than the fair proportion of relative fame and excellence can justify. Perhaps this fault is in some measure excusable, on account of the superior interest taken by all nations in excellence of their own growth; and if readers are gratified by such deference to their feelings, writers will not fail to comply with their wishes. We do not pretend to have made no sacrifices of this sort; but being sensible that disproportion is a real blemish in a work, and that in this instance it partakes of the nature of injustice, we hope we shall not be found to have exceeded the bounds of moderation in this particular. We have most sedulously endeavoured to avoid the more serious fault, of awarding to our countrymen individually, more than their due share of merit in comparison with foreign competitors. In this point we would be truly citizens of the world.

"The circumstance of *age* or *period* in which the claimants have lived, has an operation similar to that of country. We are much more impressed with the relative consequence of persons who have

trod the stage of life within our own memory, than those whose scene of action has long been closed, though equally eminent in their day. Of course, curiosity is more active respecting the former; and to this natural predilection it may be proper for the biographer to pay some deference, provided he does not too much infringe the principle of equitable proportion, which ought essentially to regulate a work, professing to comprehend every age of the world as well as every country."

With respect to the *compass* of the work, he admits that biography will bear to be written much at large, and in judicious hands is often the more entertaining and instructive the more it is minute; and that in a plan so extensive as this characteristic sketches can alone be given; but he expresses a hope that they will be found to have dismissed few characters of *real eminence* "without fully answering the leading biographical questions, What was he? What did he? His moral and intellectual qualities, the principal events of his life, his relative merit in the department he occupied, and especially the manner in which he was first formed to his art or profession, with the gradations by which he rose to excellence, have engaged our attentive inquiries, and we have attempted to develop them with all the accuracy that conciseness would allow."

"If," he adds, "we have faithfully observed the rules of composition above suggested, it is evident we cannot have been mere copyists or translators; since we may venture to assert, that no model exists of a work of this species, executed with any degree of uniformity, upon such principles. For our materials, it is true, we must in general have been indebted to the researches of former historians and biographers.....But, in melting down the substance of different narrations into one, in proportioning the several parts, in marking out the characteristic features of the portrait, and in deducing suitable lessons and examples of human life, we have freely exercised our own judgements, and have aspired, at least, to the rank of original writers."

In the first division of the articles of the General Biography, the divines, metaphysicians, philosophers, natural and moral, and mathematicians, were assigned to Dr. Enfield, and all the other classes were undertaken by Dr. Aikin; but the unfortunate event of Dr. Enfield's death before the completion of the first volume, compelled my father for a time to extend his labors. The whole of the letter *C*, excepting the mathematical articles, and a few the authorities for which existed only in German and the other languages of the North of Europe, was written by him; but afterwards the

late Dr. Thomas Morgan succeeded to nearly the whole of Dr. Enfield's department.

The copious extracts just given from a preface, all the promises of which were, on my father's part at least, so punctually fulfilled, may suffice as a general account of the nature of a work on which the opinions both of critics and readers have long since been pronounced; but a few particulars respecting the modes of study adopted by him during the course of his twenty years' task, and the effects upon his own mind of this application of his powers, may be thought no uninteresting or uninstructive part of his personal history.

It had been my father's previous practice to write over twice, and sometimes oftener, whatever he destined for the press; and with regard to his works in general, that *respect for the public*, which he always considered as one of the most indispensable of literary duties, led him to observe this custom to the end; but, with respect to his biographical articles, he soon discovered this laborious process to be unnecessary, and in fact scarcely practicable. Such, however, was his dread of suffering any marks of haste, either in style or matter, to escape him, that through the whole course of so long a work he persevered in the constant observance of another of his literary habits, which indicated the modest no less than

the diligent composer. This was, never to commit a single page to the printer without causing it to be previously read aloud by one of his family in his own presence, and in that of any other members of the domestic circle who could be conveniently assembled. During these readings he listened with close attention, often mentioned the alterations which then suggested themselves to his mind, or the new ideas which struck him; and not only permitted, but invited and encouraged, the freest strictures even from the youngest and most unskilful of those whom he was pleased to call his *household critics;* good humoredly citing the story of Moliere's submitting all his pieces to the judgement of his old woman, as a proof that the honest impressions of *any* hearer or reader, were worth some attention. His principal object, however, in following this method was, to preserve his style from the fault which most of all offended him in every kind of writing,—*obscurity;* a fault which many instances prove that men of the most sagacious minds are frequently unable to detect in their own compostions except by experiment of their effect upon others. The statement of Gibbon, that he had never communicated to a single person any part of the manuscript of his history, was, I remember, particularly noted by my father on reading it, as a fact which went

far in accounting for the perseverance of so able a writer in that enigmatical mode of expression which became the characteristic blemish of his manner.

How far the clearness of his own style, which is so perfect that I believe no one ever found it necessary to read a sentence of his a second time to find the meaning, is to be attributed to the occasional suggestions of others, I find it difficult to decide; as the distinctness of his ideas, and his entire freedom from affectation, were very likely of themselves to have ensured to him this advantage; but I can speak with all the certainty of personal experience to the pleasures and benefits derived to his family from his social and communicative habits of study. From witnessing so closely the progress of his various works, they insensibly acquired a lively interest in the subjects of them; these again became favorite topics of domestic discussion, and often led on to references to books and facts which from these associations were impressed indelibly on the memory. Nor could the reasoning powers fail of being strengthened and matured by these inquiries, carried on under the indulgent guidance of one who did not desire even from his own children a blind and prejudiced adherence to his opinions; but, on the contrary, never ceased to impress upon them as

the most important of all maxims, that their reason was given them for the discovery of truth, and that there were no subjects on which it was not allowable, and even laudable, to exercise it independently, within the limits of modesty and candor. For myself,—if I may be pardoned the egotism,—I must ever regard it as the most important of many intellectual privileges for which I am grateful, to have grown up to maturity under the eye of my father during the time that he was engaged upon so many "fair designs," and especially on this; by virtue of which the illustrious of all ages were made to pass as it were before us in a long and leisurely procession, while we questioned each of his title to a pedestal in the Temple of Immortality. This was indeed philosophy teaching by example; and to the lessons then received, to the principles thus imbibed, I am bound, not in duty and affection alone, but in the strictest justice, to ascribe whatever favor any biographical attempts of my own may since have found with an indulgent public. But for my father they never would have had an existence,—to him is to be attributed whatever merit they possess; all that I can justly claim is that of having treasured up his precepts and followed to the best of my abilities his example.

——— *sequiturque patrem non passibus æquis.*

My father was accustomed to observe, that the rapidity with which the nature of his work obliged him to pass from one character to another, had at least this advantage; that it did not allow him to contract that partiality towards the subject of his pen which was the prevailing vice of detailed biographies; and this remark leads me to the consideration of the effects which the habit of contemplating and delineating this boundless variety of human characters produced upon his sentiments and his mode of expressing them. The honest indignation which he felt at the exaggerated style of those partial relations which he was often obliged to take as the groundwork of his narratives, led him to renounce for himself, almost totally, the use of *epithets*, which he often observed to be among the most deluding and dangerous artifices of a disingenuous biographer. This self-denial may probably impart at first sight somewhat of an air of coldness and severity to his portraits; but when once the eye of the spectator has learned to content itself with the sober coloring of nature, I believe he will readily acknowledge that full justice has been done to the features and expression even of his most distinguished favorites. The moral discrimination of the writer was so perfected by habit and practice, which never had the effect of blunting his moral sensibility,—that he seized

almost intuitively on the marking traits of a character, and exhibited them by a brief but masterly selection of the actions or circumstances in which they were most clear and prominent: having so done, he commonly left them to make their own impression on the reader, convinced that the cause of biographical, as well as of many other kinds of truth, is better served by a simple statement of facts, than by reflections and inductions in which, unless they be exceedingly trite and obvious, readers cannot be expected unanimously to concur.

The rare impartiality which presided over all his statements both of facts and motives, has, I think, been universally acknowledged; no man, I am convinced, ever labored more earnestly and steadily to subdue the prejudices to which all are liable; and I have sometimes even thought I perceived, that where he was conscious of a political bias, he has compelled himself to do *more* than justice to certain characters of the opposite party. Favorite characters however he unquestionably had, and favorite classes of characters; but his predilections were such as he could have had no hesitation in avowing,—such as he must have wanted his best virtues to have been without.

The lives of celebrated writers he treated with great pleasure when their personal qualities were strongly marked, and their fortunes sufficiently

known to afford fair scope for narrative; but that nice observance of proportion which forbade him to enter into any considerable detail of literary criticism, was somewhat unfavorable to the interest of this class of articles. His predilection for inventors in every way sufficiently appears by his preface. Patriots of every land commanded a large share of his homage; but with respect to those of antiquity, he preferred, on the whole, the Greeks to the Romans;—when a Greek *was* virtuous, he said, his virtue appeared to be both of a purer and a milder quality than that of a Roman.

One class of French characters he greatly admired and took particular pains with; being of opinion that their fame, in this country at least, was by no means equal to their merit; and these were, magistrates,—such men as L'Hospital, La Moignon and Malesherbes,—courageous champions of the oppressed and miserable people, when despotic power was triumphantly careering over law and right;—beautiful examples of purity of life and simplicity of manners, when licentiousness, frivolity, and a base servility, had become characteristic of the court and nation. The small band of genuine lovers of their kind whose business in the world was doing good, "fair virtue's silent train," received from him the most assiduous and affectionate celebration:—holding as he did

that all moral virtue was to be resolved into the preference of the social principle to the selfish, *disinterestedness* appeared to him the first of human qualities; and the eminent examples of it in every line, those which most deserved and required to be continually held up for the imitation of mankind.

To the list of Dr. Aikin's literary occupations during the year 1796, must be added two more of his critical essays on poems; those on Somerville's *Chace*, and on Pope's *Essay on Man*, both comprised in the present volumes. The first of these poems was certainly not recommended to his attention by any predilection for the amusement of which it treats; on the contrary, it had happened to him, very early in life, to witness two or three instances of the tyrannical behaviour sometimes exercised by gentlemen upon their tenants and inferiors in hunting, which had impressed him with deep and permanent disgust. But the lively descriptions of the manners and instincts of various animals, and of some features of rural scenery, with which it abounds, appeared to him to render this piece worthy the perusal of the lovers of verse in general; and his remarks on these portions of *The Chace* will be read with pleasure.

In his choice of the *Essay on Man* as a subject

of critical and philosophical remark, he was prompted, as I believe, not merely by its merit and popularity; he felt besides a strong impulse to rescue the author, with respect to this work at least, from the artful misrepresentations of his earliest editor and commentator, bishop Warburton; whose *dishonest* glosses upon the poet were often, in conversation, the theme of his indignant remark. In pursuance of this object, however, he has not judged it necessary to enter into any particular refutation of the errors, or falsehoods, of Warburton; but taking care to disencumber his own edition completely of his notes and commentary, he proceeds, after a general statement of their delusory nature, to supply the place by a clear and accurate analysis of his own; this is interspersed, in his usual manner, with warm and copious expositions of the poetical beauties of the piece, and with more general notices of its poetical defects.

Neither the line of his studies nor the general habits of his mind, led him to institute any inquiry into the original sources of the system which Bolingbroke is known to have furnished to Pope; he has not even mentioned the names of Plato or of Shaftsbury on the occasion; nor has he thought it necessary, in examining the poem, to show himself either the apologist or the assailant of the

system, as a whole; but in his remarks on some particulars, the judicious reader will recognise the acute and powerful thinker. Thus, on the first epistle he observes, that "in laying it down as a maxim that 'We can only reason from what we know,' he seems to invalidate some of his own conjectural arguments concerning that *order* of the universe which is to account for apparent partial defects." On the conclusion of the second epistle, he remarks, that it is not easy to say what moral effect the author meant to produce: "If man's folly is equally conspicuous in all he does; if his weaknesses are made the instruments of his happiness; if 'in folly's cup still laughs the bubble joy,' and 'not a vanity was given in vain,' it would seem very fruitless to attempt by artificial wisdom to correct the designed and inherent defects of our nature."

While he was thus strenuously laboring to improve his time and talents to the utmost, while his worldly connections were daily increasing in number and consequence, and while his children were growing up around him to that important period when the hand of a parent was required to launch them upon the world;—symptoms unexpectedly appeared which threatened him with an early separation from all earthly concerns. As early as the middle of the year 1796, he underwent a

rather severe fit of illness, which he judged to proceed from some affection of the liver, and from which he rightly supposed himself to be temporarily, not permanently, relieved. The usual effects of similar maladies on the spirits, were in his case distressingly manifest, though combated by those principles which constantly presided over his firm and well-regulated mind. On recovering from this first attack, he thus expressed his feelings in a letter to Dr. Haygarth:

"..... I now think myself *almost* as well as usual, bating a little of my walking powers, and some of the vigor of maturity. At the same time, this affair has strongly put me in mind of mortality, and I have in expectation lopped off a good many years from my date of life. But my only inference is, that I must live while I can,—do all in my power for my family and friends,—enjoy myself moderately, and leave the rest to fate. And believe me, my dear friend, when I had in my own imagination a near prospect of *breaking up*, my spirits were perfectly tranquil and serene, and I felt that the "leave to lay my being down" would not have been unwelcome. In fact, what is there at fifty (I shall be that next January) worth living on for, to a person of delicate health, with no new expectations, and involved in increasing cares? Life is not painful to me, but it

is indifferent, and *for my own sake* I had rather be out of the way of the coming bustle, and leave the young folks to settle matters, without partaking in it. Yet I think it my duty to keep up as long as I can, because I believe myself not an entirely useless personage in this world."

During the whole of the year 1797, his health continued visibly to decline; and two or three little excursions into the country during the summer failed to produce any beneficial effect. Yet in the midst of languor and suffering, and with that clear perception of all the possibilities of coming mischief which exercises the fortitude of a medical man in sickness, he never allowed himself to sink into the selfish and cheerless indolence of an acknowledged invalid; and his literary occupations were never abandoned, and remitted only in the exact degree that his bodily weakness rendered indispensable. The composition of the first volume of the *General Biography*, and the editorship of the *Monthly Magazine*, for which he also wrote a good deal, were the principal employments of the year. Towards the conclusion of it, his feelings were severely tried by the death of his dear friend Dr. Enfield, now still more closely connected with him by a literary partnership which had been carried on with uninterrupted harmony and mutual satisfaction.

He immediately drew up a short biographical notice of this most amiable man and estimable writer for the *Monthly Magazine*, and some time after edited a collection of his sermons published for the benefit of the family, to which he prefixed a more copious memoir, somewhat in the mode of the French Eloges, but characterised by a simplicity and a genuine warmth of feeling, not often to be found in those boasted performances[a]. Such was the state of debility to which sickness had reduced him at the time of writing it, that nothing less potent than the kind and friendly motive which animated him to make the effort, could have carried him through the affecting task.

At length it became necessary for him to try in earnest the effects of country air, horse exercise, and a complete vacation from the fatigues of a profession; and early in the spring of 1798 he removed to lodgings in the town of Dorking in Surry, where he was cheered by the society of Mr. and Mrs. Barbauld, who came to join him, and by a kind visit from his constant friend Dr. Haygarth. Four months were spent by him agreeably and beneficially in this delightful spot; and the result of the leisurely survey of the surrounding scenery afforded him by his daily rides,

[a] Append. (B.)

was an animated description of the country about Dorking which appeared in the *Monthly Magazine*[a]. Nor was this the only record of his abode in Surry. It is from Dorking that he dates the commencement of the second volume of his *Letters from a Father to a Son;* and in the introductory letter he explains the circumstances which had carried him thither, and describes with great sensibility the soothing effects of the charms of rural nature on a mind agitated by the cares and hurry of a city life, and deeply wounded by "the desolating prospects which the late train of human affairs had presented to the lover of mankind."

On quitting Dorking, he hoped to recover a further degree of strength by a visit of a few weeks in Bedfordshire; but here the symptoms of his disease came on with increased violence; and it soon became evident that a final renunciation of London and of his profession, was the only step by which life, with some remaining power of usefulness to his family and the public, could be preserved. To submit himself calmly to all inevitable evils, was a point of moral discipline which he had long and successfully practised; and without wasting time in irresolution or fruit-

[a] Append. (C.)

less regret, he gave up his house in Broad Street Buildings to the occupation of his sons, and in October 1798 removed to lodgings in the village of Stoke Newington, where he soon after hired a house which continued to be his home to the end of his life.

This removal may be regarded as the termination of his professional life;—henceforth he seldom acted as a physician but within the limits of his own village, and principally for the benefit of his poor neighbours; for whose service he cheerfully set apart an hour every morning, during which he gave advice to all who came, besides frequently visiting them at their own houses. Literature was his sole regular occupation, and the domestic scene almost his only sphere of action. His weak state of health during the early part of his residence at Newington, and afterwards the love of study, which continually increased upon him, supplied him with reasons for declining the ordinary visiting of the place, nor did he make any considerable efforts to keep up London society; well content to allow himself to be forgotten, by all but the few whom friendship, or real congeniality of taste, might prompt to make the effort of seeking him out in his suburban retreat. The philosophical moderation of his wishes, and the high value which he set upon that kind

of independence which is rarely compatible with projects of worldly advancement, enabled him without much difficulty to reconcile himself to a change by which the career of ambition was closed upon him for ever. Habit gradually rendered agreeable to him a mode of life which at first had only appeared tolerable; and while the success of his writings, besides making a welcome addition to his resources, gave him the well-earned satisfaction of believing that he still contributed to the pleasure and advantage of the public;—at peace in his own mind, beloved and respected by a chosen few, and happy in the cultivation of the domestic and social affections, he saw among the children of prosperity few to congratulate and none to envy.

Notwithstanding the slow progress of his health towards amendment, the year 1799, the first of his retirement, was one of the most productive of his literary life. His superintendence of the Magazine and contribution to its pages continued; the first volume of the *General Biography* was printed in the spring; and he filled up the interval between its appearance and the preparation for a second, with a translation of some Eulogies by D'Alembert, and with the completion of a second volume of his *Letters to a Son*.

The *Select Eulogies of D'Alembert*, form two

volumes octavo; a short biographical preface and a few notes, are all the original matter contributed by the translator; but whoever is acquainted with the entire work, will confess that the task of selection was one of considerable delicacy. Respecting this point, the translator states that he has taken "those articles which appeared to him most likely to engage an English reader, as well as to afford that variety of subject which might display the author's sentiments upon the most interesting topics;" he also mentions with regard to the text of the original, that he has only subjected it to such slight occasional curtailments as the prolixity of the writer's style rendered desirable; but that he has freely omitted of the notes either portions or entire ones at his discretion.

With regard to the second volume of Letters, after the full account formerly given of the nature and scope of the first, a comparison of the contents of the two volumes will sufficiently illustrate the characteristics of the later. The most obvious point of difference between the two, is in the length of the letters; thirty are comprised in the first, while the second, though of equal bulk, contains no more than seventeen. In correspondence with this diversity, the topics of the last are usually of a somewhat graver cast; and they are with fewer exceptions such as come home to the

dearest interests of the reader. A suitable progression is observable in the style and tone. In these respects the first volume preserves some traces of the characters of youth, but the second is strongly impressed with the stamp of maturity. Subjects are treated with greater depth as well as copiousness, and the results of long-continued habits of observation and reflection, and of the varied experience of life, are every where superadded to the dictates of native good-sense or the promptings of book-learned philosophy. These diversities, greater certainly than the apparent interval of time between the two will account for, admit however of an easy explanation.

Not less than twelve or fourteen years previous to the publication of the first volume, the idea had already occurred to the author of embodying his remarks on a variety of subjects, moral, literary, and critical, in a series of letters, which he then proposed to address to his sister. On further self-examination, a doubt whether he had yet accumulated a sufficient stock of original ideas to justify his claiming the public attention in this mode, induced him to suspend his design, and give the precedence to others which he had meditated in less difficult walks of literature. He continued, however, silently and gradually, to make preparations for this favorite work; and in

proportion as topics suggested themselves to his mind, to form sketches of which he afterwards availed himself. But the first volume of his Letters absorbed all those early collections, and when he sat down to the composition of the second, his *recent* ideas alone remained to supply him with materials. It will be interesting to observe the direction which circumstances, public and private, had given them.

The disappointment of the friends of French liberty was now consummated. The impetuous spirit of that people, after breaking out in those excesses of civil fury which had filled all Europe with horror, had found a fresh vent in the passion for military glory; the achievements of the new republic had already far exceeded the boldest projects of Louis XIV.; she had more than repaid to her continental foes all the evils which their aggression had inflicted upon her; England itself was threatened by her with invasion; and even those who in the outset had protested the most strongly against the war, as neither just nor necessary, were compelled to acknowledge that it had now become both, on the great principle of self-defence. Under these circumstances, every thing French had been branded with one common note of reprobation; and under the name of *French principles*, even those maxims of civil and

religious liberty which are most consonant not to reason or philosophy alone, but to the genuine spirit of the British constitution, were exposed to contravention, to obloquy, and almost to proscription. It was *their* peril which principally weighed upon the mind of Dr. Aikin, and he flew to their aid with all the force of argument, all the power of persuasion or deprecation that he was able to command. In his introductory letter he already begins to unbosom himself on the subjects nearest to his heart. "What disappointment of elevated hopes!" he exclaims; "what heart-rending scenes of public and private calamity! what triumph of violence and injustice! Who but must turn with loathing from successive fields of carnage, and shameless violations of all faith, equity, and humanity! Nor as yet do the clouds begin to disperse, nor can a gleam of brighter day be discerned through the gloom!" In the enlarged contemplations of philosophy however, and in the conviction that good, on the whole, preponderates, he shows that philanthropy may find reasons to acquiesce in the partial and temporary sufferings of individuals, whether inflicted by human or material agents. The greater difficulty, he proceeds, is to witness with composure "the failure of prospects of the melioration of the condition of man by the efforts of his own rea-

son,—and he who has adopted the pleasing theory of a progress towards wisdom and virtue, will deplore, more than any common evils, the subversion which seems to threaten *principle*." After instancing those fundamental maxims of free government which are most endangered, he points out the temporary causes which have occasioned this retrogradation,—cautions against the weakness of trying truth by partial or temporary results, or deserting principles on account of their erroneous or abusive application,—and ends by wishing for his son, "in the generous spirit of ancient philosophy," a free and independent mind, a habit of estimating men and things by another rule than the opinions of the day, of making truth the great object of his researches, and of respecting himself too much to be dazzled by artificial splendor or awed by arrogant assumption.

The next letter, *On Party*, is written in the same intention with the former. It combats the favorite maxim of certain writers, that parties are all alike,—that they are "the madness of many for the gain of a few,"—points out the essential and eternal moral difference between the party of abuse and that of reform,—then lays down rules and gives cautions for avoiding the violence and absurdity, the credulity, the unfairness, and the

littleness of party; and thus concludes: "It is true philosophy alone that can elevate the mind above all that is low and debasing; and opposite as the characters of *Philosophy* and *Party* have usually appeared, I despair not of their union in one breast."

It is sufficient to name the letters, *On Authority in Matter of Opinion*, and *On the Respect due to Superiors*, to intimate to the judicious reader the direct application of these pieces to the circumstances of the times; in fact, the last of these sets out with an avowal of this motive of selection equally worthy, as it appears to me, of the philosopher and the free-man. "At a time when, on the one hand, extravagant notions of equality have endangered the existence of civilized society, and on the other, arrogant claims of superiority are maintained to a degree subversive of all the principles of civil liberty, it may seem a delicate and hazardous matter to touch upon a subject so involved in party prejudice as that announced for the present letter. But considerations of this kind have little weight with me, in the choice of topics on which to exercise free and manly discussion. On the contrary, the more interesting they are rendered by temporary circumstances, the more they appear to me to demand that temperate examination whence useful

rules may be derived for the conduct of those in whose welfare we are most concerned."

The Letter *On Openness and Sincerity*, refers very distinctly to certain difficulties in which the holders of free opinions were then, as at present, involved by the ruling spirit of the times; it also exposes the extravagant notions of the obligation to obtrude controverted opinions in all companies, at that time promulgated by the author of a celebrated system of Political Justice. That *On the Taste for Farming* aims at removing some delusory notions respecting the pleasures of an agricultural life, which were then extremely prevalent, and to which many a thoughtless deserter from the office, the counter, or the counting-house, has owed the ruin of all his rational prospects in life.

Of the miscellaneous letters void of particular application to the times, three are based upon the biographical studies of the author. That *On a Criterion of Perfection in Writing*, I should point out as a peculiarly successful effort in philosophical criticism, and one which it required a rich mind to produce; yet it is I think excelled in reach of thought by that *On the comparative Value of different Studies*, which likewise exhibits very extensive knowledge, both of the various branches of human learning and of the characters

of those by whom they have been eminently cultivated. On a topic like this, it is scarcely possible for any man to be perfectly impartial; some predilection for the objects of his own pursuit, some depreciation, or neglect of those with which he is imperfectly acquainted, will, in spite of himself, be apparent to others. A sagacious reader might probably in this piece detect some of the predilections or prejudices of the author; but if he had his preferences, it may be allowed that he was not destitute of cogent arguments to defend them.

I quote part of the concluding paragraph for the sake of a remark which it suggests. "It is not, then, merely the species of study, but the mind and spirit with which it is pursued, that should regulate our estimate of the intellectual powers of the student. Folly often conceals herself under the mask of seriousness, and wisdom is sometimes light and playful. The latter knows she hazards nothing by occasionally descending from her dignity; whereas folly loses all by losing appearances." This observation is peculiarly characteristic; no man was less a dupe to *gravity* than my father: a solemn air, particularly in a young person, gave him a prepossession against its wearer which was rarely to be overcome; he certainly on all occasions thought "the merrier *fools*

the wiser," and few things delighted him more in his biographical reading than any anecdotes showing genius, wisdom, or virtue in happy union with that artless sportiveness which belongs to innocence and good humour alone. I am persuaded that in writing this sentence he had in his mind a story of the great and excellent Dr. Clarke, which he was fond of telling: This eminent person and two or three of his chosen learned friends, were one day amusing themselves with jumping over chairs and tables, and other youthful pranks;—suddenly Dr. Clarke, looking through the window and espying a solemn personage in a large wig making his approach, exclaimed in great apparent alarm,—"Boys, boys, be grave, here comes a fool!"

The letter *On the best Mode of encountering the Evils of Life*, forms an excellent sequel to that *On Consolation*, in the former volume; it particularly discusses the two principles of *resignation* under evils, and *resistance* to them; shows that, notwithstanding their apparent opposition, *both* may and ought to have their place in teaching us either contentedly to endure privations, or bravely to encounter obstacles. Referring then to the power of *substitution*, which he had before pointed out as the best alleviation under the loss of friends, and observing that "in

all evils of a similar class the same relief should be sought after; and that the pursuit of it requires the union of the spirit of resignation with that of resistance,—the first, to prepare the way for the second,"—he has the following striking reference to his own situation:

"I have lost, probably for ever, that health which fitted me for active services and enjoyments, and with it many sources of happiness and utility. Shall I abandon myself to unavailing sorrow, and drag out a lifeless existence in the inaction of despair? No. My head and hands are still free,—I can write, read, and converse. To these then I must look for my future amusements and occupations, and I may yet make a good *salvage* for the remains of life." Those who followed him into his retreat,—who were his companions of all hours,—who shared his sentiments, his designs, his studies, and his amusements, can bear their honest testimony to the constant and cheerful mind with which he acted up to the spirit of these noble self-exhortations. We had no vain repinings to endure,—no selfish exactions,—no fretful idleness. While his illness continued, he was gentle, affectionate, uncomplaining, and still industrious; as health and strength gradually returned, we saw him active, cheerful, animated, contented with the life which he led, and partak-

ing with a relish of the cheap and simple pleasures still within his reach. The cultivation of a little garden, with a few of his favorite rock plants, and an aviary; exploring rambles through the neighbouring fields and villages, the easy chat of the domestic circle, the occasional visits of a few of the most congenial and affectionate of his London friends, and now and then a social day, or a morning of sight-seeing in the great city, were sufficient to attune his mind to cheerfulness, and to invigorate him for the mental labor which he loved.

Portions of two or three of his letters written to Dr. Haygarth in 1798 and 1799, may interest some readers from the view afforded of his opinions, or impressions, on medical subjects.

"I am very glad that you mean to communicate to the world some of the results of your long and very attentive medical observation. Such as you are the only persons I wish to write on our profession. We want *facts*, and not fine-spun reasonings or plausible theories. I often feel absolutely shocked at the little advance that has been made in the healing art, in really important points, within our memory. Perhaps you are not of the same opinion, but I think you must agree with me that much ingenuity has been wasted on trifles."

And again: "Your kind plan of finding an useful and profitable employment for my pen, is an additional instance to many others of your friendly zeal in my favor, and demands a fresh acknowledgement. It does not however require much reflection to induce me to give up the scheme, since it would probably engage all my remaining days in a course of study which I have intermitted, and which would be less pleasant, and I believe less profitable to me, than my actual occupations. In truth, the interest I take in professional matters is now very small, and I have been completely disgusted with the absurdities of theory, and extravagancies or ambiguities of practice, with which the history of the art, down to the present day, abounds. I long ago became sensible, also, that to confine the history and biography of medicine to our island was a narrow and prejudiced plan, and that nothing less than a view of the whole progress of medical opinion and practice was an adequate subject for an enlarged mind. But this is such a vast topic, that nothing less than entire health, spirits, zeal, leisure and opportunities can enable a person creditably to go through it. What Haller has done in his *Bibliotheques* is perhaps enough for mere utility,—and what an immense labor has he performed! To make the work also in-

teresting and entertaining would be an Herculean task."

" ..... I am pleased with your *wooden tractors*[a]; for although I do not think much is gained by freeing mankind from one delusion, when they are so prone immediately to rush into another, yet I love to see fraud and folly exposed. The faculty, however, may thank themselves for several late quackeries, since they have evidently originated from their mysterious and subtile theories."

The desire of enjoying some personal intercourse with his friend, urged him in the summer of this year to take a journey to Bath, whither Dr. Haygarth had recently removed; but a serious return of illness was the result of this effort. Early in the following year, he experienced a slight paralysis of the left arm; this was attended with no permanent effects, but he well understood the warning, and he related the circumstance to his medical friend with the following remarks:— "This I take as a sort of token what I may some time expect; as indeed some symptoms had before led me to suspect. But if my *writing hand* is spared, I shall think myself pretty well off. I can indeed assure you that my spirits have not been

[a] The medical reader will recollect Dr. Haygarth's curious experiments with wooden tractors, made for the purpose of exposing the quackery of the metallic ones.

in the least affected by this incident. I had *rather* not die by inches; but be it as it is decreed!"

After this, his constitution began to rally; and he went on in a progress towards firm health, which continued with few interruptions for a long course of years; his spirits improved in consequence, and his occupations are thus described to Dr. Haygarth in June 1800:—

"I continue to go on in my biographical trammels, which keep me to constant, but not very hard, work. We are now printing the 2d volume, which will be almost entirely of my composition. Enlarging my department has of course extended my line of reading, but I do not think myself much the better or wiser for all the *theological* matter I have been obliged to go through. Without the deciding bias of interest, an inquirer into these points is more likely to end in scepticism than in conviction. Error is so manifold, while truth is only one, that the chance of hitting upon the latter is very small. It is well that these doubts do not attend upon practice, and that duties are generally clear, however obscure may be the systems from which they are derived."

In consequence of some remarks of his friend in answer, the subject is resumed in a following letter, thus:—

"For the credit of the next volume of Biogra-

phy, now almost printed, I must remonstrate with you, my friend, about your opinion of my incapacity as a theologian. Do you think that it requires a black coat to form a just notion of matters accessible to every man of reading? Is it not even an advantage to be free from the shackles of sect and profession? I flatter myself that no liberal man can take exception at my articles under that head. I have studiously avoided any mixture of personal opinion, and have faithfully endeavoured to assign to every one his just merits as a man and a scholar, not regarding the particular cause he has supported. However, it was certainly right that this department should be assigned to another hand, and it is already turned over to a proper person. What I retain is no more than I can do with such moderate exertion as is perfectly agreeable to me, and indeed necessary to keep me in spirits. You will find that a few physicians have passed through my hands; but I really cannot descend from kings and heroes to employ myself solely about the paltry intrigues and nonsensical opinions which occupy so much of medical biography. I hope you will approve my article of Boerhaave, who is hitherto my best medical subject.

"The Magazine still affords me a good deal of monthly employ. I have also varied my studies

by writing some more critical pieces for editions of English poets. I wish you could see an essay on the poetry of Milton which I have written at the desire of Cadell and Davies for a new pocket edition. I think it is my best performance of the kind. You see I am not idle. Indeed I have more than one necessity for working, and I wish not to live longer than I can use my pen."

The *Essay on the Poetry of Milton* is inserted in the present collection; and I imagine it will be thought to justify the preference of the author. He spared no efforts to raise himself "to the height of this great argument," and the style is wrought up not into elegance merely, but brilliancy.

To the summer of this year belongs the story of a visit, detailed in a letter to Mrs. Barbauld, which no reader of sensibility, it is believed, would wish omitted.

"Harborough, July 7th.

"Would you have thought me, my dear sister, a likely man for such a flight of sentiment, as that, being somewhat above forty miles from Kibworth, I could not forbear visiting it? In fact, it had long been the subject of my waking and sleeping thoughts, especially of the latter, and I was resolved to give way to the impulse. So yesterday after dinner I left G—'s mounted on his

old mare, which I had tried before in a couple of short excursions,—and boldly pushed on for Kettering, 27 miles, that evening. This morning, starting early, I came to Harborough to breakfast, and thence, with beating heart, rode the five miles to Kibworth. The church is visible the greatest part of the way, so that my approaches were very gradual. I had even *sang froid* enough to turn off first to Lower Kibworth, by way of abridging the round. One of the first objects that met my eyes was Captain Dawes's old mansion with all the windows boarded up, and apparently quite deserted. It struck a damp on my spirits, from which, however, I recovered on learning from some workmen that it was fitting up for a new occupant. I was here told on inquiry that a Mr. Goodman, a farmer, lived at Smeaton. Supposing he was our old Betty's husband, I rode on; but on coming to the house, I found a good old couple indeed, but only by name and acquaintance connected with our friends. I was, however, cordially received, for they knew our family, and the man remembered me coming to church with my father. After a while, came in their son, the curate of the parish, a decent young man, who lives with his wife in the new and handsome parsonage house. I was informed that the other Goodmans

now lived at Gumley, which was too much out of the way for a visit.

"I found that I had no acquaintance living at Kibworth; so mounting again, I made a slow circuit quite through the town, which I found vastly *lessened* in my eyes; yet our old house still makes a respectable figure. It is inhabited by the widow Humphreys. The casement windows and balcony remain as before.

"I made a complete tour of the churchyard, and recognised many familiar names among the tombs, but was disappointed in not meeting with that of our grandfather. Had he a monument? There were several become illegible through a coating of moss.

"Such has been my visit to the *native village*. I am not sorry I made it, though I scarcely know whether to call the impression on the whole agreeable or otherwise."

Dr. Aikin now accepted the editorship of a proposed new edition of Dr. Johnson's poets, with considerable additions and alterations. The plan was, for the editor to subjoin to the biographical and critical prefaces of Dr. Johnson such remarks, either by way of supplement or correction, as he should judge proper, to reject entirely some articles, and to supply new prefaces to the works of

such poets, not included in the former collection, as it should be judged expedient to comprise in a new one. The strange omission of the author of the *Faery Queen* by Dr. Johnson,—an unpardonable instance either of neglect or prejudice,—was the first deficiency which he found to supply; and it was for this purpose that he composed the *Account of the Life and Works of Spenser* which stands at the head of his critical pieces contained in the present volumes. Of this intended collection of English poetry, fourteen octavo volumes had been printed, comprising the works of Spenser, Butler, Cowley and Milton, when the circumstances of the publisher put a stop to the undertaking. The remarks respecting the three last-named poets added by my father, seemed to me incapable of appearing with advantage detached from the prefaces by Dr. Johnson, and they are therefore not here reprinted.

In the intervals of his regular occupations during the year 1801, Dr. Aikin composed for the use of young people a very instructive little volume entitled *The Arts of Life*. It is in the form of Letters, and under the three heads of food, clothing and shelter, gives a clear and elegant view both of the arts of first necessity, and of those ministering to the comfort and convenience of man. The knowledge which it contains is very

various and extensive, and of a kind which the books for young people do not usually afford; and it is well calculated to excite that *spirit of observation* which the writer considered it as one of the leading objects of education to inculcate. A further contribution to this effect was his *Woodland Companion; or a brief description of British trees, with some account of their uses;* published a few months afterwards. The subject was an old favorite, as appears from his elegant paper on the notices of trees in the Latin poets; and, in fact, the first sketch of the work had long been lying by him, in the form of a brief botanical description of trees, illustrated with neat drawings by his own hand; copied, I believe, as were the plates in the printed work, from Dr. Hunter's edition of *Evelyn's Sylva.* He now however greatly enlarged his design, and embellished it, in his usual manner, with quotations from the English poets.

About this time he received a very unexpected proof of the continued regard of one of the friends of his youth, in a bequest of 1,000*l.* 4 per cents from Dr. Pulteney, then of Blandford in Dorsetshire; with whom he had enjoyed no personal, and very little epistolary intercourse, since they had parted at Leicester eight-and-thirty years before. The circumstance touched him very sensibly; and the more, because he always ascribed it rather to

Dr. Pulteney's reverence and affection for the memory of his father, than to his esteem for himself, whom he had known only as a youth. The merits of Dr. Pulteney as a physician, and especially as a botanist, could not be allowed to pass altogether unrecorded; and he had great satisfaction in paying the tribute to his memory of a short memoir, originally published in the *Philosophical Magazine*, and now reprinted[a].

The cordial friendship entertained by Dr. Aikin for Mr. Wakefield, almost from the commencement of their acquaintance at Warrington, has been already recorded; and the renewal of their social intercourse has been adverted to as one of the circumstances which he anticipated with the warmest satisfaction on taking up his residence in London. It will therefore be readily conceived, that he had felt the sentence which doomed Mr. Wakefield, as the author of a pamphlet judged libellous, to an imprisonment of two years in Dorchester Castle, almost as a personal misfortune. His joy on the approaching liberation of his friend was proportionally lively; and it was well expressed in the following lines, published in the *Monthly Magazine;* in which it will however be observed, that some prudential counsels are gently insinuated amid the sincere expression of esteem and affection.

[a] Append. (D)

TO GILBERT WAKEFIELD, A.B.

ON HIS LIBERATION FROM PRISON.

Pure light of learning, soul of generous mould,
Ardent in Truth's great cause, erect and free,
Welcome, O welcome! from thy prison gloom,
To open air and sunshine, to those boons
Which Nature sheds profuse, while tyrant Man,
"Drest in his brief authority," and stern
In all the little jealousy of pow'r,
Restricts the bounty of a Father's hand,
And scants a Brother's bliss.——But now 'tis o'er,
And social friendship and domestic love
Shall pour their healing balm; while conscious worth
With noble scorn repels the sland'rous charge,
That brands imprudence with the stamp of guilt.
Meantime disdain not, learned as thou art,
To scan this world's great lesson: high-raised hopes
Of Justice seated on the throne of Pow'r,
Of bright Astrea's reign reviv'd, and Peace,
With heavenly Truth and Virtue by her side,
Uniting nations in a band of love,
Have faded all to air; and nought remains
But that dire law of force, whose iron sway
The sons of men through every blood-stain'd age
Has ruled reluctant. When that sage benign,
The Man of Nazareth, preach'd his gentle law,
And listening crowds drank honey from his tongue—
When Mars, Bellona, and the savage rout
Of Gods impure and vengeful, shrunk to shades,
And rescued Man adored a common sire;
Who could refrain to hail the blessed time
Of swords to sickles turn'd, of general good
Pour'd in full streams through all the human tribes,
And shared alike by all? But ah! how soon
The glorious prospect darken'd! When the cross
Gleam'd direful 'mid the host of Constantine,

And took the eagle's place—when mitred priests
Mimick'd the flamen in his mystic pomp,
And proudly bent around a despot's throne;
Then, whilst the name at Antioch first rever'd
Ran conquering thro' the world, it lost its sense,
And join'd in monstrous league with all the crimes
That force, and fraud, and lawless lust of sway
Inspir'd to plague mankind. Then, Gospel-rules
Were held an empty letter; and the grave
And specious commentator well could prove
That such an holy, humble, peaceful law
Was never meant for empire. Thus relaps'd,
The human brute resumed his native form,
And prey'd again on carnage.
Cease then, my Friend, thy generous, hopeless aim,
Nor to unfeeling Folly yield again
Her darling sight, of Genius turn'd to scorn,
And Virtue pining in the cell of guilt.
Desert no more the Muse; unfold the stores
Of fertile Greece and Latium; free each gem
From the dark crust that shrowds its beauteous beams,
And fair present them to th' admiring eye
Arranged in kindred lustre. Take serene
The tranquil blessings that thy lot affords,
And in the soothing voice of friendship drown
The groans, and shouts, and triumphs of the world.

Mr. Wakefield replied in the following warm lines:—

TO JOHN AIKIN, M.D.

Next to that first of comforts to the soul,
The plaudit of a conscience self-approv'd,
AIKIN! I deem the gratulation sweet
Of sympathising friendship, and a Muse
Terse, uncorrupt, ingenuous, bold and free;
A Muse from whom nor titled grandeur bribes,

Nor pamper'd wealth, a sacrificial strain.
Hence, with sensations bland of conscious pride
I feel the manna of thy tuneful tongue
Drop medicinal influence on my breast,
Ruffled, not torn, by Persecution's blast.
Thus, after chilling frost, morn's genial ray
Invigorates, cheers, expands, the shrivell'd flower:
Thus the broad mountain flings his cooling shade
O'er the faint pilgrim in a thirsty land.
Oh! may thy friend, as in the noon of life,
Responsive to the calls of truth and Man,
Self in benevolence absorb'd and lost,
Thro' the short remnant of his closing day,
With brave defiance, or with calm disdain,
Front the grim visage of despotic power,
Lawless, self-will'd, fierce, merciless, corrupt;
Nor, 'midst the applauses of the wise and good,
Lose the fond greetings of a Muse like thine!

Too truly, alas! did this excellent man here speak of the "short remnant of his closing day!" Not three months after these lines were written, the friends to whom he had just been restored, were called upon to resign him for ever. He was carried off by a fever, the fatal termination of which was anticipated by himself from the beginning. When the friends who surrounded his bedside were anxiously striving to remove a melancholy prepossession which they could not admit to be well-founded, some one mentioning my father, he eagerly exclaimed;—"Yes, let me see Dr. Aikin, I know *he* will tell me the truth!" He

was immediately sent for, but came only to deplore the rapid advance of the inevitable catastrophe. To do, at all hazards, immediate justice to the memory at least of such a man, my father felt to be a sacred duty. How he has performed it, will best be learned from his own pen[a].

But his sympathy with genius and virtue was not dependent on the emotions of friendship, and he was about the same time gratified with an occasion of paying a tribute to these qualities in the person of a stranger. At Liskeard in Cornwall, there had long existed, buried in the most profound obscurity, the Rev. Henry Moore, a dissenting minister of deep learning, particularly in biblical criticism, and of exemplary piety and worth. These qualities were recognised in him by a few brother ministers and by the very small circle of his congregation and acquaintance; but that he possessed, and had diligently cultivated, the talents of a poet of an elevated class, was scarcely known to two or three individuals. At length, the good man, irresistibly won to confidence by the amiable and gratifying attentions of a lettered friend who sometimes visited him in his retreat,—the late lamented Dr. Pett of Clapton,—placed in his hands "a volume of MS. poems, which, with singular modesty, he requested him to show to some person

[a] Append. (E)

sufficiently conversant with productions of the kind, to judge of their fitness for the public eye." The affecting sequel is thus related in the preface with which Dr. Aikin introduced these poems to the public. "I was applied to on the occasion; and I trust the readers of these pieces will be convinced that I could not hesitate in giving a decided opinion in their favor. In reality, I scarcely ever experienced a greater and more agreeable surprise, than on the discovery of so rich a mine of poetry, where I had not the least intimation of its existence. That the author should have passed seventy years of life almost totally unknown, was a circumstance that excited the interest of all to whom the poems were communicated; and we were impatient that, however late, he should enjoy those rewards of merit which had been so long withheld. In the mean time he was attacked with a severe stroke of the palsy, which, while it left his intellects free, incapacitated him for every exertion. There was now no time to be lost. My offer of taking upon myself the whole care of editorship was thankfully accepted; and a subscription was set on foot which met with the warm support of many, who were desirous that all possible comfort should be supplied to cheer the helpless decline of such a man. But the progress of debility anticipated these well-intended

efforts. He sunk tranquilly under his disease on Nov. 2, 1802; having, however, lived to enjoy some satisfaction from the knowledge that there were persons whom he had never seen, who could regard him with cordial esteem and friendship."

These poems, consisting chiefly of odes, elegies and hymns, rich and ornate in their diction, and strongly impressed with the noblest sentiments of virtue and the warm spirit of devotion, were well received by a certain class of readers, and passed through two editions.

My father's health was now vigorous; and he was able without inconvenience to gratify himself with little tours through interesting parts of the country which were new to him. These were always performed in an open chaise, with my mother for his companion; and were repeated annually during a considerable period. His ardent love of the varied face of rural nature, and the talent for observation which distinguished him, rendered these little excursions, of which he always made copious journals, the source of instruction as well as delight; and his contributions to the Magazine were frequently varied by the description of objects which had thus fallen under his attention.

In the mean time, the publication of the Biography, which was regulated by the convenience of

the bookseller, went on at a rate which allowed him ample intervals of leisure for other pursuits. A French translation from the German of Zschokke's *History of the invasion of Switzerland by the French, and the destruction of the democratical republics of Schwitz, Uri and Unterwalden*, coming accidentally into his hands, the deep interest of the narrative of that heroical struggle for national independence, so engaged his feelings, that he resolved to give a translation of the work, with a preface, and a supplement bringing down the history of the democratic cantons to the restoration of their ancient form of government, which the First Consul had finally acknowledged the expediency of permitting.

The preface thus strongly expresses the sentiments with which its author regarded the progress of the military despot who was then effecting the subjugation of the continent and menacing the invasion of Great Britain :—

" The publication of this work in English at the present period was thought peculiarly calculated to promote that spirit of resistance to unprincipled ambition, and the schemes of universal domination, which is alone to be relied upon in the arduous contest in which the nation is now engaged. The history of the memorable struggle here recorded will show what a people very in-

considerable in point of wealth and number was able to do in checking the progress of a host of invaders, by the mere force of native courage and the enthusiastic love of liberty and their country. .....Moreover, it cannot fail to impress every generous mind with an indignant sense of the insolence of a lawless conqueror, and the degradation incurred by a vanquished and subjugated people.....The renovation of the democratical cantons, partial and imperfect as it may be, will present the useful lesson, that determined valour secures the esteem even of those against whom it is exerted, and softens that fate which it may not have been able to avert."

Towards the latter end of the same year, 1803, he occupied himself in the composition of a volume of *Letters to a young Lady on a course of English Poetry;*—an agreeable proof of the undiminished zeal with which he exerted himself to diffuse a love and knowledge of that noble art from which, during life, he had himself derived such pure and elevated delight.

His next contribution to poetical criticism was an essay prefixed to an edition of Dryden's Fables, which he esteemed it a service to the general reader to separate from the obsolescent mass of Dryden's political and controversial pieces. He has pointed out the excellencies of these de-

lightful narratives with the truest taste and feeling; and his comparisons of the finished work of Dryden with the sketches supplied him by his originals, will be found curious and interesting. About the same time, he gave a new and improved edition of his translations of the Life of Agricola and the Manners of the Germans; and undertook a work which requires a more extended notice, entitled, *Geographical Delineations, or a Compendious View of the Natural and Political State of all parts of the Globe.*

"The precise object aimed at in this work," says the author in his preface, "is to afford, in a moderate compass, and under an agreeable form, such a view of every thing most important relative to the natural and political state of the world which we inhabit, as may dwell upon the mind in vivid colours, and durably impress it with just and instructive notions. In the prosecution of this design, I have been guided by the two leading considerations respecting each country, what nature has made it, and what man has made it. ..... Both together have as much as possible been brought to conspire in forming the characteristic strokes of the sketch ..... No particular class or age of readers has been in my view in this performance. If it prove answerable to my intentions, young persons of both sexes, at the period of finishing

their education, may peruse it with advantage, as a summary of what is most important to be remembered relative to the topics treated of; and it may afford compendious information and matter for reflection to those of riper years, who are destitute of time and opportunity for copious research."

From this statement it will be perceived, that it is a leading object of this performance to communicate those enlarged views respecting the globe and its divisions, with their various occupants, which may rightly be called *the philosophy of geography*. Its place, then, is neither among the regular systems of this science, nor among their abridgements for the use of schools;—it stands by itself, and is designed to follow, or accompany, not supersede, these works. That the matter of fact which forms the basis of the design must be derived from books, is almost too obvious to be stated; it was, in truth, the product of a very extensive course of reading; but not only the language, but those reflections which form what may be termed the *soul* and *spirit* of the work, are entirely the author's own. In tracing these *outline maps* of knowledge, it has formerly been observed that he peculiarly excelled; and the neatness and elegance of his execution is, in my opinion, no where more conspicuous than in the piece before us. The plan was a favorite one, and he worked

upon it with ease and spirit. In all the branches of knowledge to which he applied his mind, it was characteristic of him, leaving abstruse theories and difficult problems on one hand, and dry details on the other, to seek in a middle course the useful and the agreeable combined. Such has been his proceeding in tracing his *Geographical Delineations*; and I know none of his undertakings in which he has more completely accomplished his object.

Many of Dr. Aikin's works have been reprinted in the United States, and an edition of this appeared at Philadelphia in 1807, with a scientific introduction and appendix, and copious additions to the original account of North America.

A few notices of the progress of his feelings and opinions may be gleaned from the letters addressed to Dr. Haygarth about this period. At the close of 1802, after observing that he had passed a pleasant year, in perfect health and spirits, and adverting to the welcome addition which had been made to his habitual society by the removal of Mr. and Mrs. Barbauld from Hampstead to Newington,—he thus proceeds:

"So you have the great ex-minister at Bath! Pray have you the honor of attending upon him? Though I am not an implicit admirer of his political conduct, I should be much gratified to hear him in a private room, for without doubt he is no

ordinary man. The present state of things has brought me into an indifference to every thing public, which I cherish as the *euthanasia* of all that was uneasily active in my cosmopolitical character. I have settled into a conviction that England is the best country in the world, that he is the best minister who lays the fewest taxes, and that the truest wisdom, public and private, is to enjoy present good and avoid present evil. I am cured of all theoretical ideas of reform; and if I am not convinced that all *is as it should be*, at least I doubt whether *it can be better*. What remains with me, is a wish that we should not make that retrograde motion with respect to light and freedom which many seem desirous of promoting: but, after all, bigots cannot extinguish the freedom of the mind, and the fewer that partake of it, the more honorable the distinction.

"Our friend —— has returned from abroad as much an Antigallican as one could wish. He cannot be more so than I am, and I have not the least inclination to imitate the example of several of my friends, and visit France, with all its wonders. If I can find leisure for a little domestic jaunt every summer, I shall be satisfied. We do inhabit a charming country,—that is the truth of it,—and I wish I could visit every part of it."

In the following summer, after expressing the

satisfaction and pride with which he beheld *all* his sons in the ranks of the volunteers enrolled to resist French invasion, he adds :—"The present ardor and unanimity in defence appears to me highly honorable to the national character, and I trust will produce the effect either of preventing or defeating the schemes of our enemies. I confess, I wish we had a clearer cause, upon paper, for our hostilities; but the sacred duty of defence against an inveterate foe can never be questioned."

A letter dated in May 1804 thus records his genuine impressions respecting the character of Dr. Priestley, the tidings of whose death in the United States had been recently conveyed to England :—

"Possibly you may have seen in the *Monthly Magazine* a late biographical exertion of mine in commemoration of Dr. Priestley. I meant it as a plain narrative, rather than an eulogy or an apology, except that I was desirous of strongly inculcating a conviction of his perfect sincerity in all he wrote, and of the purity of his motives. I always lamented, as I believe you did, that he should have spent the force of his powerful mind upon the subjects which most engaged his attention; but he had a right to decide for himself, and no man was ever more beyond the influence of persuasion[a]."

[a] See Append. (F)

In the autumn of 1805, the death of the excellent Dr. Currie again imposed upon him the melancholy duty of commemorating the talents and virtues of a departed friend. Since the period of his quitting Warrington, he had only once, on a hasty visit of Dr. Currie's to London, enjoyed the satisfaction of an interview with one whose society was so peculiarly formed to interest and delight him;—but the deep impression of their early intercourse had never faded from either mind; and Dr. Aikin was one of the two persons to whom Dr. Currie, in an affecting kind of *literary testament* traced with his dying hand, committed the care of his surviving fame, previously requesting, that if there were any memoir of him, it might be "*short and delicate.*" So commissioned, my father could not hesitate to comply with the request of the family in giving the brief account which his opportunities enabled him to compose; earnestly hoping at the same time that fuller justice would subsequently be done to the subject, by the distinguished friend whose name was constantly associated with that of Currie in every generous plan of private benevolence or public good[a].

It was a striking proof of the enlarged and philosophical spirit which had presided over Dr. Aikin's critical pursuits, that his mind always re-

[a] Append. (G)

mained open to the claims of fresh candidates for literary fame. A new poet was to him like a new star in the horizon of the astronomer, and he rejoiced and triumphed in the brightness of its beams. Thus, no predilection for an earlier school of poetry, had prevented his doing full justice to that which owed its origin to the genius of Mr. Southey and Mr. Coleridge; and I have reason to believe that he availed himself of one of the most respectable sources of periodical criticism, to express his warm sense of the poetical powers displayed in some of the earliest productions of these gentlemen. With Mr. Southey he had afterwards much satisfaction in cultivating a personal acquaintance, and he entertained for him the true interest of a friend. I well remember, too, the eager delight with which he first caught the animated strains of the *Lay of the last Minstrel*, which he used to characterize as the perfection of ballad poetry; and the high admiration, the deep though somewhat painful interest, with which he received the early cantos of *Childe Harold*.

In general, it may safely be affirmed that there was no poetical merit of his time to which he was indifferent; but about this period there arose a poet who engaged his attention in a peculiar manner;—this was Mr. Montgomery. In the *Wan-*

derer of Switzerland, and the smaller pieces by which it was accompanied, he discovered a freshness of fancy and a depth of feeling which in his judgement stamped them as true works of genius; at the same time, the tone of melancholy which pervaded them was too genuine and too profound, not to excite his sympathy. As it appeared that one at least among the causes of the author's dejection was the world's neglect, he endeavoured to cheer him by a few laudatory stanzas on his poems, inserted in the *Athenæum*. By means of a common friend, Mr. Montgomery was soon apprized to whom he owed this poetical greeting, and he wrote a letter of acknowledgement; this was immediately answered by Dr. Aikin, and thus commenced a correspondence which was carried on for a considerable time, with great spirit, and with much frank and interesting disclosure on the part of Mr. Montgomery respecting his early life and the formation of his literary character, without any personal intercourse between the parties. At length, Mr. Montgomery visited London, and a meeting took place, which proved mutually satisfactory and agreeable, notwithstanding the romantic expectations which the previous circumstances could scarcely have failed to excite. After some time the correspondence languished, but from no other cause than a want of topics of com-

mon interest; my father's esteem for Mr. Montgomery always continued unabated, and he never spoke of their intercourse but with sincere pleasure.

Early in the year 1806 my father's connection ceased with the *Monthly Magazine*, and he immediately engaged in the establishment of a new periodical work, on what he regarded as an improved plan, entitled *The Athenæum*. The *thorough respectability* of the publishers concerned, and their entire forbearance of every kind of interference with the management of the editor, rendered his concern in this undertaking a source of great satisfaction to him; and no pains were wanting on his part to render it successful. He obtained the assistance of many highly respectable literary friends, and several months were almost entirely occupied by himself in preparations for the work, of which the first number appeared on the last day of 1806. It was carried on during two years and a half, when the proprietors, not finding the sale answerable to their expectations, gave it up: the elegant style in which the *Athenæum* was printed, which rendered it considerably more expensive than any other monthly publication of a similar nature, appears to have been the principal cause of its failure.

One family event of this year may be adverted

to, on account of the lively satisfaction with which it was welcomed by Dr. Aikin, and the large addition which it made to his happiness and that of all who were dearest to him. This was the marriage of his son Charles to the eldest daughter of Mr. Wakefield; in whom we had the rare felicity to find the high-souled integrity and noble ingenuousness which marked her for the child and pupil of such a parent, in union with

> "—— all that cultured taste approves,
> Or fond affection dearly loves."

For fifteen years we enjoyed the privilege of her delightful and affectionate society,—her memory we can never lose.

The death of the Rev. G. Walker in 1807, the last survivor of the tutors of Warrington academy, gave occasion to a short memoir of him by Dr. Aikin originally printed in *The Athenæum*[a].

During a suspension of the publication of the Biography in 1809, Dr. Aikin employed himself in translating from the Latin *Memoirs of the Life of P. D. Huet, Bishop of Avranches, written by himself.* The work was inscribed to Mr. Roscoe in an affectionate dedication, and enriched with an introduction concerning the state of learning in the time of this erudite prelate, and with numerous notes biographical and critical. It was pub-

[a] Append. (H)

lished in the spring of 1810. A few months afterwards, on receiving from Mr. Roscoe a copy of his *Occasional Tracts on the War between Great Britain and France*, comprising some remarks on a motion of Lord Grey's in favor of peace, he addressed to his friend the following letter expressive of the state of his political opinions at this juncture:—

"I have just been reading your observations on Lord Grey's motion, and cannot forbear congratulating you on this new effort in the cause you have always had so much at heart, that of universal philanthropy. I find my sentiments so much in unison with yours on this subject, that I feel pride in the conformity. Peace, indeed, has long been my chief, I may say almost my sole, political wish. Regarding, as I do, war as the greatest of all the pests with which human society is afflicted, I think the termination of it an actual good with which any hypothetical evil consequences are not to be placed in balance; and experience has taught me to hold very cheap all that human wisdom which submits to present and urgent ills through apprehension of worse that may possibly succeed.

"What effects may proceed from your publication I am unable to foresee. Probably your expectations are not sanguine: but at any rate you

will have entered your protest against the madness of the public councils, and have contributed your share towards bringing the nation to a sounder state of opinion. The subsisting engagements with Spain must doubtless interpose a great difficulty to any negotiations for peace till the fate of that country is decided; for I can scarcely suppose that Napoleon would consent to any arrangement that would leave it independent; but all your arguments pointed against the panic and indistinct fears of the nation, which are the permanent obstacles to peace, are independent of this circumstance, and seem to me perfectly conclusive.

"I should anxiously inquire, were we to meet, your sentiments on various other topics, on which I am inclined to believe we should readily harmonize; but a letter is not the place for such discussions."

In the year 1811, Dr. Aikin published a volume of *Essays Literary and Miscellaneous*, being much enlarged and corrected copies from draughts which had previously appeared in the pages of the *Monthly Magazine* and the *Athenæum*. Three fourths of this work are occupied by two essays, *On Similes in Poetry* and *On Poetical Personifications*, which may be regarded as very complete *critical directories* for the employment of those splendid embellishments of poetical composition:

they are likewise rendered agreeable to the general reader by a copious selection of examples from the greatest masters of verse, Latin, English and Italian. The remaining contents of the volume are *Verbal Remarks*, principally directed to the leading words in political and religious disputes, and pointing out and exemplifying the proper and the improper application of them; and a few miscellaneous essays, greatly resembling, both in style and matter, his *Letters to his Son*, and in no respect inferior to them.

About this period, my father had entertained some thoughts of engaging in a history of English literature; but, on further consideration, the magnitude of the design, and the difficulty of finding proper coadjutors, deterred him from the attempt; the course of reading and inquiry into which it had led him did not however prove entirely unproductive. It now occurred to him, that such a view as he had afforded by his translation of the memoirs of Huet and the appended notes, of learning and its professors in France, might usefully be extended to England during the earlier part of the 17th century, when this country first began to take a distinguished station in the republic of letters,—provided any character of sufficient importance to fill the centre of the picture could be found. A short examination pointed out

two distinguished scholars, one of them also eminent as a divine, and the other as a lawyer and politician, around whom all the notices of persons and things which he was desirous of communicating, might conveniently be arranged;—these were Selden and Archbishop Usher; of whom he composed lives which, together with the subjoined notes, fill an octavo volume. The share taken by these two learned friends, whose difference of party did not impair their mutual esteem, in the great civil and religious contests of their times, has obliged their biographer frequently to allude to these trying topics; and the performance derives additional interest from this circumstance. This work appeared in 1812, and was inscribed to John Whishaw, Esq. of Lincoln's Inn, as a pledge of high esteem and long and cordial friendship.

Towards the close of 1811, Dr. Aikin accepted the office of editor of Dodsley's *Annual Register*; an employment which henceforth occupied somewhat more than half his time in a kind of labor which was not on the whole unpleasant to him. Soon after, a transfer of the property of the *General Biography* to new hands, put an end to the long suspension of the work, and the completion of this task, in conjunction with his new undertaking, called upon him for the full exertion of his powers.

Early in 1813, in a letter addressed to Mr. Roscoe on the receipt of one of his political pieces, he thus expressed himself:—

"Accept my cordial thanks, my dear Sir, for the present of your last publication, which I perused with the melancholy pleasure of seeing good sense and sound argument employed in the cause of virtue and patriotism, but a cause not only depressed by the hand of power, but unpopular among those who are most interested in supporting it. The late political events have, I confess, deprived me of all expectation of seeing better principles prevalent in this country; whilst the general state of the world has as little allowed me to indulge hopes of melioration elsewhere; and were I not obliged in consequence of my engagement in Dodsley's *Annual Register* to attend to public events as they are passing, I think I should shut up my mind to every thing but old books, and old and new friends.

"It is fortunate that, interested as we may be in these subjects when they come before us, they do not, to most men at least, form the staple of life, and that personal and domestic concerns take, in fact, the nearest and most habitual place in our hearts. To me, I with gratitude acknowledge, that these are the source of pleasures which much overbalance the disquiets arising from occasional

meditation upon the affairs of a world which, while it seems to me going very wrong, I have no power to set right. And, indeed, if I can suppose the same of other persons, I ought perhaps to conclude, that the errors of this world in the general are not so destructive to individual happiness as at first view they appear. And when I think, my dear friend, of you, with your natural good spirits, your active mind, your many domestic comforts, and a state of health, I trust, little impaired, I cannot but hope that election disappointments and party triumphs will make but small inroads upon your peace, or abatement of your enjoyments.

"Were I at present inclined to desponding thoughts, I should not find time to indulge them, for I scarcely remember when I was so much occupied. I am at this moment conducting through the press a large quarto and octavo; the former the 8th volume of the *Biography*, which is going on again, and I hope will meet with no more stops to the end. The latter, the *Annual Register* for 1812, which I am composing as well as printing. I am not commonly afraid of work, but I almost feel myself too much hurried with this double task. My health is however good, and I have seldom been in better spirits."

In the following year he addresses another

friend nearly in the same strain of sentiment,—thus:

"Your Newington friends go on in the jog-trot of life, if not very gayly, at least contentedly. We have the enjoyments of health, family comforts, books, and a few friends; and surely this is a tolerable compromise with fortune in a world so full of change and casualty. For myself, nothing can be more uniform than my train of existence. My daily occupation is writing; my amusements, a visit now and then to town, walking, reading, and domestic relaxations. I am as yet scarcely sensible of the approach of old age, though perhaps others may be so for me. My health has never been better than through the last winter, severe as it has been. In short, were it not for some anxiety for the future, and the extinction of all those hopes of public and private melioration which I once pleased myself with entertaining, I should enjoy my existence as much as I have ever done. My first public wish is to see the restoration of peace, for none of the late triumphs which have been so loudly boasted of, at all compensate to my feelings the widely-diffused miseries of war, and the personal burdens of it in which we all share. I more and more detest the horrid war-whoop sounded in our papers, and echoed by party and private interest, and in my scepticism

respecting the good intentions of *all* men in power, I feel indifferent to any other success than that which will soonest give repose to the suffering world."

The *General Biography* was at length completed in the spring of 1815; and the termination of his twenty years task could not, on the whole, be other than a cause of rejoicing and self-gratulation. It would have been mortifying to leave such a work unfinished; and at the age of 68, not many years more of bodily and mental vigor could reasonably be reckoned on. Yet, there is always somewhat of melancholy connected with the conclusion of a long work;—to part with an employment which habit has rendered easy, and probably agreeable, is parting with a faithful friend; and for the occupations, like the attachments, of the active period of life, age can seldom find satisfactory substitutes. The form of a dictionary unfortunately did not permit him to take leave of the work with those general reflections,—that concluding moral, which comes with so good a grace from the experienced collector and narrator of a long train of facts; but his philosophical mind had long exercised itself in meditations suggested by his biographical studies; and some of their results will be found in the miscellaneous pieces comprised in the present collection, particularly

in one of considerable length *On the Formation of Character.*

A letter to Dr. Haygarth, the last specimen of my father's epistolary style which I have to offer to the public, records the state of his feelings on public and private matters in the spring of 1815.

"Time has run on so unperceived amidst my different engagements, that I have scarcely been aware of the long interval in our correspondence; but I now feel impatient for a little epistolary converse with one who has for so many years possessed my affection and gratitude, and for information of his state of health and that of his family. With respect to me and mine, not much has occurred to break the prevalent uniformity of life. I have passed the several seasons since we met in general good health, and my ordinary routine of employment.....The mildness of the winter has been favorable to advanced life; January alone with us offered any severity of cold.

"But whilst nature is presenting a smiling countenance, what a terrible prospect is opening of human affairs, in consequence of the most unexpected turn things have taken in France! The success of this unchained tiger, this new "scourge of God," portends nothing less than the revival of a general war in Europe, of the event of which who can see further than the certainty of blood-

shed, devastation, and every kind of calamity? If we take part in it, as doubtless we shall, what an addition to the burdens under which we are groaning, and which press so heavily upon the comforts of life in the middle ranks of society! I own I have scarcely courage to confront the evils which seem accumulating round us, after we had indulged a hope of seeing better days. I was about to conclude my history of the last year in the *Annual Register*, with a fond anticipation of general peace and prosperity; though I own the grasping spirit disclosed by the leading powers in the general congress gave me some misgivings as to the continuance of public tranquillity; but such a change as we have witnessed who could foresee? I wish to know how you, in whose constitution hope and favorable views of mankind are so happily predominant, are enabled to support your spirits on this occasion. Is it not too plain that Europe, at least as long as this fiend is in existence, (or, I may say, as long as the dreadful armies which support him are in being,) will be nothing but a gladiatorian amphitheatre? I am so absorbed at present in these thoughts, that I can scarcely divert them by books or common studies; but why should I endeavour to spread the gloom to a friend? Enough of this."

With a mind thus overclouded by public cares,

constant employment was to Dr. Aikin a necessary condition of existence, or at least of any tolerable enjoyment of it; and as his powers were still vigorous, he was not long in finding some means of supplying the vacuity which had been left by the completion of the Biography. He formed a collection entitled *Select Works of the British Poets*, with short biographical and critical prefaces, which proved to be his last contribution to the cause of poetical taste; and he also engaged in a historical work which will permanently add to his reputation.

For many years it had been his practice, for his own use and that of his family, to note down in a concise manner the leading public events of his time, in the form and under the title of *Annals of the Reign of King George III.* These he now reviewed, and having greatly enlarged them by reference to various sources of authentic information, presented them to the public in two volumes octavo. The first edition ended with the peace of Paris in 1815, but a second brought it down to the death of George III. The preface claims for the work no other character than that of "a summary of the principal events, domestic and foreign, of the late reign." "In its composition," adds the author, "the objects in view have been, perspicuity and order in narrative, selection of the

most important circumstances, and a strict impartiality, exhibited not only in a fair and ungarbled representation of facts, but in the absence of every kind of colouring which might favour the purposes of what may properly be denominated *party*. This last intention, which has never ceased to guide the writer's pen, did not appear to him necessarily to preclude every expression of his feeling on points involving moral or constitutional questions; but he trusts that he shall be found to have used this liberty with moderation and reserve, and without any effort to enforce opinions in their nature dubious or disputable. Where, indeed, in the records of history can the period be met with, which, to one whose life has passed in contemplating the whole shifting scene, is calculated to inculcate a more impressive lesson against presumptuous confidence in speculative notions, or positive judgements respecting characters and actions?"

No one, I believe, not himself under the strong influence of the spirit of party, will dispute the perfect sincerity with which it was in this instance disclaimed. Who indeed can ever aspire to the difficult praise of impartiality in treating of contemporary history, should it be denied to one totally unconnected with public life, shackled by no obligations to a patron or a party, destitute of all

aspiring views either for himself or his family, of a temper naturally calm and equitable, who, near the close of a long life passed in the pursuit of wisdom and the study of mankind, sits down with the sole and single purpose of relating facts without suppression or disguise for the instruction of his countrymen? The style of this work possesses the neatness, perspicuity and vigor, which mark the manner of the writer; other praise it does not affect,—but how rare and how valuable is this manly and elegant simplicity!

The *Annals* appeared in the summer of 1816; the remainder of that year was passed by the author in health and comfort, and he was still planning new designs,—for no one was ever more stedfast in the purpose to "work while it is called to-day,"—but the night was fast approaching. Early in the following spring, the melancholy prognostication which he had drawn from the temporary numbness of his arm, so many years before, was verified by a severe and dangerous stroke of the palsy, which deprived him for a time of the use of his faculties, and nearly of the power of speech. After a few months, he regained his health, and with it his mental powers, some failure of memory excepted; but he knew too well, and felt too keenly, that this was a respite not to be relied upon for a day or an hour; and we had the grief

to observe his spirits gradually sinking under the consciousness of a slow but sure decay of all his capacities of usefulness and enjoyment. This deplorable progress was strikingly hastened by a severe domestic calamity, the death of his youngest son[a].

[a] I trust it will not be judged a trespass against propriety to insert in this place a brief tribute to the memory of a man of genius and of worth, whose hard fate it was to die without his fame, originally composed for insertion in a collection of Lives of English Architects, which has not yet been given to the public.

Edmund Aikin was born at Warrington, in Lancashire, on October 2, 1780.

With the exception of occasional attendance at a day-school, his education was entirely domestic, and his excellent and assiduous parents his sole instructors. The preference of private to public instruction, a choice seldom expedient with respect to those who are destined to be the artificers of their own fortunes,—was in his case decided by the early appearance of a considerable impediment in speech, which, united with a disposition reserved and sensitive in the extreme, rendered it alike indispensable to his progress and his happiness to continue to him the benefit of modes of instruction contrived expressly for his use, and still to surround him with the tender protection of his home. It was from this infirmity probably, and from the means adopted to lighten its pressure upon his spirits in childhood, that his character received its stamp, his genius its direction, and the destiny of his life its prevailing color.

Pensive, imaginative, and taciturn from necessity, reading and reverie held the first place among his pleasures, and almost in infancy he discovered in the use of the pencil a resource which he seized upon with avidity, and continued to improve with ardor.

To copy, was of course his earliest exercise, in which he acquired unusual accuracy and neatness of hand; but he quickly

From misfortune of this nature our family had mercifully enjoyed a long exemption; during a

aspired at something like originality, and in the thousands of human figures and countenances which his leisure moments were occupied in sketching, he shadowed forth the features and actions of his favorite characters in history, the visions of the poets whom he studied with unceasing delight, and the inspirations of his own fertile fancy.

It soon became manifest that his vocation was to one or other of the arts of design; and his father's removal to London in the year 1792 afforded opportunities for the cultivation of his talent which were sedulously improved; at the same time it was judged prudent to select as his profession an art which, by uniting the useful with the ornamental, seemed less precarious as a means of support than either painting or sculpture; and at a proper age he was articled to a highly respectable surveyor and builder. Adequate provision was thus made for his acquisition of the principles of construction, and of its mechanical details; but for all that constitutes the architect, in the noblest sense of the term, he was still to be indebted to voluntary study, to observation, reflection, and the promptings of his own mind. In this situation, while his diligence and punctuality secured the esteem of his master, the unfoldings of his genius realised the fondest hopes of his family and friends. The glories of his art were never absent from his thoughts; he sketched, he planned, he meditated, and his imagination revelled with delight amid temples, palaces, and triumphal arches of his own creation. On becoming his own master, he immediately commenced business for himself as an architect and surveyor, and soon obtained a moderate share of employment. Adopting the literary habits of his family, he also exercised his pen on professional topics, and several of the earlier articles in Dr. Rees's *Cyclopædia*, in the class of civil architecture, were written by him.

The laudable desire of seeing a free communication of ideas established among members of the same profession, and of extending

period of five-and-thirty years, my father had not once been called upon to resign a member of his

the influence of an art which he loved, induced him to become one of the founders of the London Architectural Society, established on the principle of each member's producing in turn either an essay on some professional subject, or an original design, accompanied by an ample description, which became the topic of discussion for the evening. In 1808 the Society published in an octavo volume a selection of the essays read at its meetings, and one on Modern Architecture by Edmund Aikin led the way. This piece, composed in the vigorous and original style which distinguished his productions, displayed much reading, both professional and general, and, what is much higher praise, it exhibited a mind capable of penetrating into those first principles of art on which the just application of all technical rules must depend, while it evinced that enlargement as well as refinement of taste which belongs to such minds alone.

Two years afterwards, he gave to the world a series of designs for villas, preceded by an introduction of considerable length, in which he further unfolded his opinions on modern architecture, and on the kind and degree of imitation of the ancients best suited to the purposes and circumstances of the present times. He opposed with ingenuity and force the prevailing fondness for the Gothic, as applied to domestic architecture, and proposed as a substitute an adaptation of the Oriental, or Mohammedan style of architecture, chiefly as exhibited in Mr. Daniell's Views in India. This idea he illustrated by several designs of an ornate and picturesque character.

In 1812 he presented to the Architectural Society the most important of his works, his Essay on the Doric Order; which was so highly approved that it was determined to publish it, at the expense of the Society, in a splendid folio form, illustrated with several plates. This piece possessed, besides its intrinsic merit, that of supplying a desideratum. All architectural writers, from Vitruvius downwards, had treated of this order, the earliest and the most

household circle;—and in the state of decay to which he was now reduced, so keen a trial of pa-

majestic of all, according to such ideas of it alone as were to be derived from the existing Roman examples, depraved imitations, as it now appears, rather than faithful copies from the temples and other public edifices which ennobled the cities of ancient Greece. At length, these venerable monuments had been explored and described by English travellers and artists, with skill and diligence worthy of the objects; and the learned and splendid work of Stuart and Revet on Athens, the Ionian Antiquities published by the Dilettanti Society, and the later work of Mr. Wilkins, afforded sufficient materials for a much improved delineation of Doric architecture, founded on pure and primitive models. Such a delineation, the pen and pencil of the author here afforded; he also compared and criticized the examples which he presented, and he concluded by giving some original designs of this order adapted to modern imitation.

Mr. E. Aikin afterwards resided for a considerable time with General Sir Samuel Bentham, and gave his assistance to this distinguished engineer in several public works which he was planning or executing at Sheerness, Portsmouth, and elsewhere. In this situation his attention was particularly called to the subject of bridge-building, and he published in concert with Sir S. Bentham the designs for a bridge erected over the river Swale.

An interesting essay on St. Paul's cathedral, accompanying the designs of Mr. James Elmes, proceeded from his pen in 1813, which, with some observations on the architecture of the age of queen Elizabeth, appended to his sister's *Memoirs of the Court of Queen Elizabeth*, completes the catalogue of his printed writings.

The preference which his designs for the Wellington assembly rooms at Liverpool received from a committee appointed to conduct the undertaking, induced him in 1814 to repair to the spot, where he superintended the execution of the building; and the encouragement of several valuable friends engaged him to fix his future residence in that town. Another public building, the Liverpool In-

rental feelings as now occurred, was evidently beyond his strength. He avoided complaint almost

stitution, was committed to his management; but it was here his business to adapt an existing edifice to this destination by alterations and additions,—a task of more difficulty and less honor than the erection of an entirely new one. He also decorated the town and environs with several elegant villas, and other buildings; and if, in some instances, he was obliged to comply with the fondness for modern Gothic against the dictates of his own taste and judgement, his profound knowledge of the principles of construction on which this style depends, enabled him to give uncommon correctness and elegance, and what may be called an air of good sense, combined with picturesque effect, to these difficult imitations. These qualities were still more strikingly displayed in many designs for churches which he composed on different occasions, none of which, however, have yet been executed.

The progress of an architect in the higher branches of his art is in this country slow and difficult; because great ignorance, and consequently great indifference, on the subject of architectural beauty and deformity pervades the British public. In addition to this general cause of delay and disappointment, the success of Mr. E. Aikin was impeded by temporary and local obstacles, and most of all, perhaps, by the reserve, the timidity, the scrupulous delicacy, and the nice sense of honor which characterised him. Meantime, life was wearing away; a constitution never robust had been undermined by severe attacks of illness; spirits never very buoyant had begun to yield to depression, and the brilliant visions with which conscious genius had cheered the morning of existence began to fade from before him. These changes were beheld with anguish by the few who thoroughly knew and could duly appreciate his many great excellencies, moral and intellectual:—his extensive knowledge, his strong and clear judgement, his fine taste, and his ardent love of the good and fair;—the sweetness and serenity of his temper, the modest gracefulness of his manners, the moderation of his wishes, the manly independence of his principles, and the

entirely, but his anguish was profound, and its effects incurable. Enough of bodily strength however remained, to protract the struggle with existence till the mind was almost totally obscured. One sentiment alone, that of affectionate attachment towards those whose assiduity ministered to him all of comfort that he could yet enjoy,—and to her, most of all, whose tried and faithful tenderness had best deserved a husband's love,—survived and triumphed to the last.

After a long course of the distress and suffering incident to this form of natural decay, which those who have ever witnessed it will sufficiently conceive, and of which others may regard it as a privilege to be able to form no idea,—a stroke of apoplexy closed the scene on December 7th, 1822.

That life may not be prolonged beyond the power of usefulness, is one of the most natural, and apparently of the most reasonable wishes man can form for the future;—it was almost the

perfect truth and probity which presided over all his words and actions. During the summer of 1819, he had struggled with difficulty through a protracted malady, and had been enabled to resume with some energy his professional occupations; but the seeds of disease still lurked in his constitution, and a winter journey from Liverpool to London the following Christmas perhaps hastened their development. Alarming symptoms recurred with augmented force, and after a painful struggle he expired at his father's house, at Stoke Newington, on March 11th, 1820.

only one which my father expressed or indulged, and I doubt not that every reader will be affected with some emotions of sympathetic regret on learning that it was in his case lamentably disappointed. To those whose daily and hourly happiness chiefly consisted in the activity and enjoyment diffused over his domestic circle by his talents and virtues,—the gradual extinction of this mental light was a privation afflictive and humiliating beyond expression. But in all the trials and sorrows of life, however severe, enough of alleviation is blended to show from what quarter they proceed; and there were still circumstances which called for grateful acknowledgement. The naturally sweet and affectionate disposition of my dear father; his strictly temperate and simple habits of living, and the mastery over his passions which he had so constantly exercised, were all highly favorable circumstances; and their influence long and powerfully counteracted the irritability of disease, and caused many instructive and many soothing and tender impressions to mingle with the anxieties and fatigues of our long and melancholy attendance. His literary tastes were another invaluable source of comfort; long after he was incapacitated from reading to himself, he would listen with satisfaction during many hours in the day to the reading of others;

poetry in particular exercised a kind of spell over him; Virgil and Horace he heard with delight for a considerable period, and the English poets occasionally, to the very last. The love of children, which had always been an amiable feature in his character, likewise remained; and the sight of his young grand-children sporting around him, and courting his attention by their affectionate caresses, had often the happy effect of rousing him from a state of melancholy languor and carrying at least a transient emotion of pleasure to his heart. His health also continued generally good almost to the end, and we had seldom the distress of seeing him under the influence of bodily pain. The final boon, an easy dismissal from life, was also granted him.

He was interred in the church-yard of Stoke Newington, where a simple monument is erected to his memory with the following inscription:

In memory of
JOHN AIKIN, M.D.
who was born at Kibworth in Leicestershire
Jan. 15th, 1747,
died in this parish
Dec. 7th, 1822.
A strenuous and consistent assertor
of the cause of civil and religious liberty
and of the free exercise of reason
in the investigation of truth.
Of unwearied diligence in all his pursuits,

he was characterised,
in his profession,
by skill, humanity, and disinterestedness;
in his writings,
by candor, by moral purity,
by good sense, and refined taste.
In the intercourse of society
he was affable, kind, cheerful, instructive;
as a husband, a father, and a friend,
unblemished, revered, and beloved.

To this summary of my father's character I have nothing here to add;—should any desire a description of his outward form, let them accept the following. He was of the middle stature, and well proportioned, though spare; his carriage was erect, his step light and active. His eyes were grey and lively, his skin naturally fair, but, in his face, much pitted with the small pox. The expression of his countenance was mild, intelligent, and cheerful, and its effect was aided in conversation by the tones of a voice clear and agreeable, though not powerful. The portrait prefixed to this work, is copied from a very resembling though unfinished water-coloured drawing, for which he sat to Wright about twelve years since.

APPENDIX.

(A) p. 38.

DESCRIPTIONS OF VEGETABLES

FROM

THE ROMAN POETS.

IT has been remarked by various critics, that modern poets have in general been much inferior to the ancient, in the truth and accuracy of their descriptions of natural objects. The versifiers of later ages, deriving their art merely from imitation, have fallen into a kind of established phraseology in their diction, which, while it cuts off all novelty of imagery, exposes the writer to perpetual mistakes, from the application of epithets and descriptions according to memory, or the rules of measure, rather than the observation of nature. Those, on the other hand, who were nearer to the original sources of poetical ornament, seldom fail to paint objects in their genuine colors, even though they may be unskilful in the employment and disposition of them. Of this we have a striking instance in the similes of

Homer, which, taken separately, are always just and lively pictures, though frequently they have little resemblance to the object to which they are applied. The number of these drawn from the vegetable creation is very small; while Virgil and the other Roman poets, probably from living in a more cultivated state of society, seem particularly fond of introducing trees and other plants into the imagery of their pieces. From a peculiar attention to this subject, I became so struck with the beauty and accuracy with which they had painted some of my favorite objects, that I was led to collect the passages, and to form from them a set of connected poetical descriptions. Some of these it is my intention to offer to the reader.

QUERCUS—THE OAK.

One of the noblest objects in the rural landscape, and a fine image for comparison on various heroical occasions.

The *height* of the oak is referred to by Virgil in the Æneid, where, describing the appearance of the Cyclopses on the shore, he says,

> —— quales cum vertice celso
> Aëriæ *quercus* aut coniferæ cyparissi
> Constiterunt, sylva alta Jovis, lucusve Dianæ.—*Æn.* iii. 679.

> So on some mountain towers the lofty grove
> Of beauteous Dian, or imperial Jove:
> The aërial pines in pointed spires from far,
> Or spreading oaks majestic nod in air.—PITT.

And probably it is on account of the same quality, that he selects this tree in particular as suffering from the stroke of lightning.

De cœlo tactas memini prædicere *quercus*.—*Ecl.* i. 17.
And heaven's quick lightning on my blasted oak.
WARTON.

The wide spread of its branches is strongly painted by the same poet in the following passage:

Sicubi magna Jovis antiquo robore *quercus*
Ingentes tendat ramos.—*Georg.* iii. 332.
Where some tall oak uprears his aged shades.—PITT.

Ovid on the same account calls the oak

——— patula Jovis arbor.—*Met.* i. 106.
Jove's far extended tree;

an epithet lost in Dryden's version, whose paraphrase is,

And falling acorns furnish'd out a feast.

Catullus compares the tossing horns of the Minotaur to the agitated arms of an oak:

———velut in summo quatientem brachia tauro
Quercum.—CATUL. lxiii. 105.

Several passages in the poets describe *the hardness of its wood.* Thus Ovid in the long string of similes which Polyphemus applies to Galatea, makes him call her

——— durior annosa *quercu*.—*Met.* xiii. 799.
— far more stubborn than the knotted oak.—DRYDEN.

And Virgil describes the operation of splitting an oak, in a line that cannot be read without a degree of effort:

Quadrifidam *quercum* cuneis ut forte coactis
Scindebat.—*Æn.* vii. 509.

Tyrrhus, who clove a tree with many a stroke,
Left the huge wedge within the gaping oak.—PITT.

Its power of resisting the fury of a storm, from its *strength*, and the *depth* to which its *roots* penetrate, is nobly represented in the following simile:

Veluti annoso validam cum robore *quercum*
Alpini Boreæ, nunc hinc, nunc flatibus illinc
Eruere inter se certant; it stridor, et alte
Consternunt terram concusso stipite frondes:
Ipsa hæret scopulis; et quantum vertice ad auras
Ætherias, tantum radice in Tartara tendit.—*Æn.* iv. 441.

As o'er th' aërial Alps sublimely spread,
Some aged oak uprears his reverend head;
This way and that the furious tempests blow,
And lay the monarch of the mountains low;
Th' imperial plant, though nodding at the sound,
Though all his scatter'd honours strow the ground;
Safe in his strength, and seated on the rock,
In naked majesty defies the shock.
High as the head shoots towering to the skies,
So deep the root in hell's foundation lies.—PITT.

Ovid seems to labor to equal or excel the grandeur of this description by a picture of the oak in peaceful majesty, distinguished by its vast bulk, and the almost divine honors which have at various times been paid to it.

Stabat in his ingens annoso robore *quercus;*
Una nemus: vittæ mediam, memoresque tabellæ,
Certaque cingebant voti argumenta potentis.
Sæpe sub hac Dryades festas duxere choræas:
Sæpe etiam, manibus nexis ex ordine, trunci
Circuiere modum: mensuraque roboris ulnas
Quinque ter implebat: necnon et cætera tanto
Sylva sub hac, sylva quanto jacet herba sub omni.

Met. viii. 743.

An ancient oak in the dark centre stood,
The covert's glory, and itself a wood;
Garlands embraced its shaft, and from the boughs
Hung tablets, monuments of prosperous vows.
In the cool dusk its unpierced verdure spread,
The Dryads oft their hallowed dances led;
And oft when round their gauging arms they cast,
Full fifteen ells it measured in the waste;
Its height all under standards did surpass,
As they aspired above the humbler grass.—DRYDEN.

The bold expression "una nemus," *itself a grove*, would scarcely apply to any other European tree, and is therefore equally appropriate and poetical.

Lucan has given a picture of the oak at a different period; no longer firm and stable, but decayed with age and ready to fall with the first blast, yet still appearing great and venerable, and forming a shade, though with its naked branches. Its application as a simile is not less happy, than the description is striking. It is made an emblem of Pompey the Great, at the commencement of the civil war, with all his honors still about him, yet

in reality, only the shadow of his former greatness.

Exuvias veteres populi, sacrataque gestans
Dona ducum; nec jam validis radicibus hærens,
Pondere fixa suo est; nudosque per aëra ramos
Effundens, trunco, non frondibus, efficit umbram:
Sed quamvis primo nutet casura sub Euro,
Tot circum sylvæ firmo se robore tollant,
Sola tamen colitur.—*Phars.* i. 37.

So in the field with Ceres' bounty spread,
Uprears some mighty oak his reverend head;
Chaplets and sacred gifts his boughs adorn,
And spoils of war by mighty heroes worn.
But the first vigor of his root now gone,
He stands dependent on his weight alone;
All bare his naked branches are display'd,
And with his leafless trunk he forms a shade:
Yet though the winds his ruin daily threat,
As every blast would heave him from his seat;
Though thousand fairer trees the field supplies
That rich in youthful verdure round him rise;
Fix'd in his ancient state he yields to none,
And wears the honors of the grove alone.

The *martial character* (as it may be termed) of this tree, probably occasioned it to be used as the basis for trophies; the captured arms of the foe being hung on an oaken trunk. Thus Æneas raises a trophy of the arms of Mezentius in honor of the God of War:

Ingentem *quercum* decisis undique ramis
Constituit tumulo.—*Æn.* xi. 5.

And bared an oak of all her verdant boughs.—PITT.

The use of the *fruit* of the oak as an *article of food* in the early ages of the world is alluded to in almost innumerable passages of the poets. There were several kinds of glandes, but those of the oak, by us termed acorns, were preferred for the use of man. This we learn from Pliny; and might also infer from a line in Virgil, in which he threatens the negligent husbandman with being compelled again to shake the oak for his subsistence.

Concussaque famem in sylvis solabere quercu.—*Georg.* i. 159.
Thou'lt shake from forest-oaks thy tasteless food.—WARTON.

ULMUS—THE ELM.

This stately tree was too beautiful and striking an object among the inhabitants of the grove to be neglected by the poets. One of its most obvious and distinguishing characters is extraordinary loftiness. Hence Virgil, in his first eclogue, introduces it with a suitable epithet, and with peculiar propriety represents the shy and plaintive turtle as making her seat on its summit.

Nec gemere aëria cessabit turtur ab *ulmo*.—*Ecl.* i. 59.
Nor turtles from th' aërial elm to plain.—WARTON.

In another place he finely paints the effect of a scorching heat by the circumstance of the bark withering on the tall elm: a very natural conse-

quence of the great height to which the sap must ascend for its sustenance.

> Nec si, cum moriens alta liber aret in *ulmo*,
> Æthiopum versemus oves sub sidere Cancri.—*Ecl.* x. 67.
> While the bark withers on the lofty elm,
> We feed an Æthiops' flock 'mid Cancer's beams.

A minute attention to propriety is scarcely any where more conspicuous in this great poet, than in the choice he makes of the elm for the tree on which to fix a mark for the javelin. The height and straightness of its trunk, and its freedom from branches, according to the usual mode of training it, rendered it the fittest that could be pitched upon for this purpose.

> ——— pecorisque magistris
> Velocis jaculi certamina ponit in *ulmo*.—*Georg.* ii. 530.
> And places for the masters of the flock,
> On some high elm the rapid javelin's mark.

From the manner of growth of this tree, its use for the support of the weak and curling vine was universally deduced; nor is any rural circumstance more frequently alluded to by the poets, in simile or description. Some instances of this will hereafter be quoted, under the article Vine; it may now be sufficient to remark, that Virgil selects the junction of the elm and vine as the discriminating topic of one whole book of his Georgics.

——— quo sidere terram
Vertere, Mæcenas, *ulmisque* adjungere vites,
Conveniat.—*Georg.* i. 1.

Beneath what heavenly signs the glebe to turn,
Round the tall elm how circling vines to lead.—WARTON.

A distinguishing property of the elm, its increasing by means of a thick crop of suckers pushed up from the roots, is noticed by Virgil.

Pullulat ab radice aliis densissima sylva.—*Georg.* ii. 17.

Some from the root a rising wood disclose:
Thus elms, and thus the savage cherry grows.—DRYDEN.

One of the uses to which the elm was applied, with the peculiar manner of fitting it for that purpose, is mentioned by the same writer:

Continuo in sylvis magna vi flexa domatur
In burim, et curvi formam accipit *ulmus* aratri.—*Georg.* i. 169.

Young elms with early force in copses bow,
Fit for the figure of the crooked plough.—DRYDEN.

The expression of *magna vi flexa*, "bent by great force," seems to denote great strength and toughness of the wood; and in another place Virgil characterises the elm by the epithet *fortis*, where he tells us, too, that there were several species of this tree:

Præterea genus haud unum, nec fortibus *ulmis*.—*Georg.* ii. 83.
Besides not one the kind of sturdy elms.

This poet slightly touches upon another use of

the elm, which is not intelligible without the aid of the agricultural writers. He says,

Viminibus salices fœcundæ, frondibus ulmi.—*Georg.* ii. 446.
Willows in twigs are fruitful, elms in leaves.—DRYDEN.

Cattle we learn were fed with the leaves of elms, which were a most agreeable repast to them; and Mr. Evelyn mentions the same practice as prevailing in some parts of this country in his time.

The elm in its natural state of a wide spreading shady tree, is pitched upon by Virgil as the roosting place of dreams in Orcus:

In medio ramos annosaque brachia pandit
Ulmus opaca, ingens: quam sedem somnia vulgo
Vana tenere ferunt, foliisque sub omnibus hærent.—*Æn.* vi. 282.
Full in the midst a spreading elm display'd
His aged arms, and cast a mighty shade;
Each trembling leaf with some light vision teems,
And heaves impregnated with airy dreams.—PITT.

This kind of tree was probably here chosen, not only for its closeness and multitude of leaves, but also as one of those which by the ancients were reckoned barren, and therefore of the funereal and ill-omened class; on which principle it was usually planted round tombs.

ILEX—THE HOLM OAK.

The Ilex is another glandiferous tree, differing,

according to Pliny, from the Oak, in having leaves serrated, and like those of the Bay, and in bearing smaller acorns. Ovid peculiarly marks it as a glandiferous tree, and as being very fertile:

——— curvataque glandibus *ilex*.—*Met.* x. 94.
The holm-oak bent with mast.

It appears to have been a very common species in Italy, and that of which woods and groves were chiefly composed. The poets usually add to it the epithet of *niger*, which corresponds with the dark hue common to all evergreens, of which this is one. Thus Virgil,

Ilice sub nigra pallentes ruminat herbas.—*Ec.* vi. 54.
Chews the pale herbs beneath the dusky holm.

——————— nigrum
Ilicibus crebris sacra nemus adcubet umbra.—*Georg.* iii. 334.
Or where the ilex-forest dark and deep
Sheds holy horrors o'er the hanging steep.—PITT.

Sylva fuit late dumis atque *ilice* nigra.—*Æn.* ix. 381.
Horrid the wood wide-spread with tangled brakes
And ilex dark.

Horace adds to this quality, those of hardiness and vigorous vegetation, and even selects it for a comparison with the noble character of the Roman people:

Duris ut *ilex* tonsa bipennibus
Nigræ feraci frondis in Algido,
Per damna, per cædes ab ipso
Ducit opes animumque ferro.—*Carm.* iv. 4. 57.

As the black ilex, shorn by vigorous steel,
Sprouts on the mountain's verdant side;
From wounds, from deaths, no dread, no loss they feel,
But grow in strength, and rise in pride.

It appears however that the wood of the Ilex was much subject to decay; for the epithet "hollow" is particularly applied to it by Virgil:

——— cava prædixit ab *ilice* cornix.—*Ec.* i. 18.

With boding croaks the hollow ilex rung.

And this he confirms by the observation that bees frequently made their hives in its cavities.

——————— apes examina condunt
Corticibusque cavis, vitiosæque *ilicis* alveo.—*Georg.* ii. 452.

In hollow bark the bees their offspring hide,
And in the mouldering holm-oak's vacant side.

This remark shows the propriety of particularising the Ilex in the two following passages:

Mella cavâ manant ex *ilice*.—HOR. *Epod.* xvi 47.
Flavaque de viridi stillabant *ilice* mella.—OVID. *Met.* i. 112.

From the green ilex yellow honey flowed.

I confess however that these lines have the air of that poetical phraseology for which I have censured the modern poets.

This tree probably delighted in a rocky soil, and the neighbourhood of water; for Horace describes it as overshadowing the source of his sweet fountain Blandusia.

Fies nobilium tu quoque fontium,
Me dicente cavis impositam *ilicem*
Saxis, unde loquaces
Lymphæ desiliunt tuæ.—*Carm.* iii. 13. 13.

Soon shalt thou flow a noble spring,
While in immortal verse I sing
The trees that spread the rocks around
From whence thy prattling waters bound.—FRANCIS.

The peculiar species of tree is lost in this translation.

With respect to its œconomical uses, we learn from Virgil that troughs for water were made of this wood.

Currentem *ilignis* potare canalibus undam.—*Georg.* iii. 330.
From troughs of ilex made to drink the stream.

And that it was particularly used for the construction of funeral pyres.

Erecta ingenti (pyra), tædis atque *ilice* secta.—*Æn.* iv. 505.
A mighty pyre of fir and holm.

We learn moreover from Horace, that the finest flavored wild boars were those fed on the acorns of the Ilex.

Umber, et *iligna* nutritus glande rotundas
Curvet aper lances carnem vitantis inertem.—*Sat.* ii. 4. 40.

The boar from Umbria, fed with ilex-mast,
Shall load his dish who hates a vapid taste.

Fagus—The Beech.

There is no doubt, from Pliny's description, that the *Fagus* of the Romans was our Beech; and few as the circumstances are which the poets have mentioned relative to this tree, they are yet sufficient to mark it with tolerable precision.

The thickness of its foliage, and wide spreading of its branches, which invited the shepherds of Italy to repose beneath its shade during the heats of noon, are twice introduced into the beautiful scenery of Virgil's Eclogues.

Tityre, tu patulæ recubans sub tegmine *fagi*,
Sylvestrem tenuì musam meditaris avena.—*Ec.* i. 1.

Beneath the shade which beechen boughs diffuse,
You, Tityrus, entertain your sylvan muse.—Dryden.

Tantum inter densas, umbrosa cacumina, *fagos*
Assidue veniebat.—*Ec.* ii. 3.

'Midst shades of thickest beech he pined alone.—Warton.

The use of its smooth and green bark for receiving inscriptions from the sylvan pen of lovers (as Thomson calls it) is noticed by the same poet.

Imo hæc, in viridi nuper quæ cortice *fagi*
Carmina descripsi, et modulans alterna notavi,
Experiar.—*Ec.* v. 13.

Rather I'll try those verses to repeat
Which on a beech's verdant bark I writ:
I writ and sung between.—Warton.

Ovid refers to the same custom; and adds the beautiful thought of the name of the fair one growing and spreading with the growth of the tree.

Incisæ servant a te mea nomina *fagi*,
Et legor Œnone, falce notata tua.
Et quantum trunci, tantum mea nomina crescunt:
Crescite, et in titulos surgite recta meos.—*Ep. Œnon. Par.* 21.

The beeches, faithful guardians of your flame,
Bear on their wounded trunks Œnone's name.
And as the trunks, so still the letters grow:
Spread on; and fair aloft my titles show.

The wood of the beech was used formerly, as at present, by the turner; and vessels made of it were considered as suited to the simplicity of the pastoral times.

——————— nec bella fuerunt,
Faginus adstabat cum scyphus ante dapes.—TIBUL. i. 11.
——————— nor raged the sword,
When beechen bowls stood on the frugal board.

Yet this cheap material was capable of receiving a considerable value from the hand of the carver. Thus Virgil's shepherd stakes a cup of this sort as one of his most valuable possessions.

——————— pocula ponam
Fagina, cœlatum divini opus Alcimedontis.—*Ecl.* iii. 36.
Two beauteous bowls of beechen wood are mine,
The sculpture of Alcimedon divine.—WARTON.

Beech timber, as we learn from Virgil, was

likewise employed in the construction of ploughs; and though the passage is not very clear, it would seem that the *stiva*, or plough-staff, was made of this wood.

Cæditur et tilia ante jugo levis, altaque *fagus*,
Stivaque, quæ currus a tergo torqueat imos.—*Georg.* i. 173.

Light to the yoke the linden feels the wound,
And the tall beech lies stretch'd along the ground;
They fall for staves that guide the ploughshare's course.

WARTON.

(B) p. 211.

BIOGRAPHICAL ACCOUNT

OF

THE LATE REV. DR. ENFIELD.

THE Rev. William Enfield, LL.D. was born at Sudbury in Suffolk, on March 29, 1741, O.S. In common with many other characters of moral and literary excellence, it was his lot to come into the world destitute of the advantages of birth or fortune. His parents were in a humble condition of life, which they rendered respectable by their virtues. His early education was probably on the narrow scale marked out by his circumstances. By his amiable disposition and promising parts he recommended himself to the Rev. Mr. Hextall, the dissenting minister of the place, who treated him with peculiar notice, and took pleasure in forming his youthful mind. He particularly awakened in him a sensibility to the beauties of our principal poets; among whom, Akenside, by the charms of his versification, and the exalted

tone of his philosophy, was a peculiar favorite both with the instructor and the pupil. It appears to me no unreasonable supposition that to his early fondness for this author, Dr. Enfield was indebted, more than to any other single circumstance, for that uniform purity of language, that entire freedom from any thing like vulgarity, as well in conversation as in writing, by which he was ever distinguished. Mr. Hextall's good opinion was probably the chief cause of his being devoted to the christian ministry. In his 17th year he was sent to the academy at Daventry, then conducted by the Rev. Dr. Ashworth. At this seminary he passed through the usual course of preparatory study for the pulpit. Of his academical character I know no more than that he was always conspicuous for the elegance of his compositions; and that he was among the number of those students whose inquiries led them to adopt a less rigid system of christianity than was the established doctrine of the place.

It was a striking proof of the attractions he possessed as a preacher, and as an amiable man in society, that almost immediately on leaving the academy he was invited to undertake the office of sole minister to the congregation of Benn's Garden in Liverpool, one of the most respectable among the dissenters. To that situation he was

ordained in November 1763; and in a town abounding with agreeable society, and distinguished by liberal sentiments and hospitable manners, he passed seven of the happiest years of his life. He married, in 1767, Mary, the only daughter of Mr. Holland, draper in Liverpool; and a most cordial union of thirty years gave full proof of the felicity of his choice. Though greatly engaged both in the pleasant intercourses of society, and in the serious duties of his office, he commenced in this place his literary career with two volumes of sermons, printed in 1768 and 1770, which were very favorably received by the public. Their pleasing moral strain, marked by no systematic peculiarities, so well adapted them for general use, that many congregations, besides that in which they were originally preached, had the benefit of the instruction they conveyed. A collection of Hymns, for the use of his congregation, and of Family Prayers of his own composition, for private use, further added to his professional and literary reputation.

On the death of the Rev. Mr. Seddon of Warrington, Mr. Enfield was one of the first persons thought of by the trustees of the academical institution founded in that place, to succeed him in the offices of tutor in the belles-lettres, and of resident conductor of the discipline, under the title of

Rector Academiæ. With respect to his fitness for the first, no doubt could be entertained. The second was an untried exertion, depending for its success upon qualities of temper rarely meeting in one individual. Whatever could be effected by those amiable endowments which conciliate affection, might be hoped from one who was become the delight of a large circle of acquaintance; but in those emergencies where firmness, resolution, and a kind of dignified severity of conduct, might be requisite, there was cause to apprehend a failure. He had his misgivings, but they were overcome by the encouragement and importunity of friends; and the offered situation was in several respects such as might flatter a young man, fond of literary society, and ambitious of a proper field for the display of his talents. He accepted it, together with the office of minister to the dissenting congregation of Warrington. The occupations in which he engaged were extensive and complicated; but no man had ever a better right to confide in his own industry and readiness.

Every one acquainted with the attempts that have been made by the dissenters to institute places of education for the advanced periods of youth, must have been sensible of the extreme difficulty of uniting the liberal plan of a collegiate life with such a system of internal discipline

as shall secure sobriety of manners, and diligence in the pursuit of study. Those sanctions which, however imperfectly, serve as engines of government in seminaries established by the state, must ever be wanting in private institutions, which cannot annex to the grossest violation of their laws a higher penalty than simple expulsion, followed by no disabilities or deprivations, and probably held extremely cheap by those who have most deserved it. Warrington had a full share of this difficulty; and also labored under others, which rendered its existence, though at times it appeared flourishing and respectable, little better than a long struggle against incurable disease. The efforts of Dr. Enfield were faithfully joined with those of his colleagues, to support its credit, and to remedy evils as they occurred. His diligence was exemplary; his services as a public and private tutor were numerous and valuable; his attention to discipline was, at least, uninterrupted; but it may be acknowledged that the arduous post of domestic superintendant, and enforcer of the laws, was not that for which he was best calculated. So sensible, indeed, was he of his deficiency in this respect, and so much did he find his tranquillity injured by the scenes to which he was exposed, that he made a very serious attempt to free himself from the burden, by resigning this

instructed with great clearness and precision; himself advancing in the science in proportion to the demand, till he became a very excellent teacher in all the parts which were requisite in the academical course.

The degree of doctor of laws, which added a new title to his name during his residence at Warrington, was conferred upon him by the university of Edinburgh.

After the dissolution of the academy, Dr. Enfield remained two years at Warrington, occupied in the education of private pupils, a small number of whom he took as boarders, and in the care of his congregation. For the instruction of the latter he drew up a series of discourses on the principal incidents and moral precepts of the gospel, in which he displayed both his talents as a commentator, and his skill in expanding into general lessons of conduct, those hints and particular observations which occur in the sacred narratives. This will not be an improper place to give some account of Dr. Enfield's character as a preacher and a divine. His manner of delivery was grave and impressive, affecting rather a tenor of uniform dignity than a variety of expression, for which his voice was not well calculated. It was entirely free from what is called *tone*, and though not highly animated, was by no means dull, and never

careless or indifferent. As to his matter, it was almost exclusively that of a *moral preacher*. Religion was to him rather a principle than a sentiment; and he was more solicitous to deduce from it *a rule of life*, enforced by its peculiar sanctions, than to elevate it into a source of sublime feeling. Despising superstition, and fearing enthusiasm, he held as of inferior value every thing in religion which could not ally itself with morality, and condescend to human uses. His theological system was purged of every mysterious or unintelligible proposition; it included nothing which appeared to him irreconcileable with sound philosophy, and the most rational opinions concerning the divine nature and perfections. Possibly the test of rationality might with him supersede that of literary criticism. It will be seen from the subjects selected for this publication, that moral topics were much more congenial to him than doctrinal ones; and his character as a public instructor must be derived from the manner in which he has treated these. Probably it will be found that scarcely any writer has entered with more delicacy into the minute and less obvious points of morality—has more skilfully marked out the nice discriminations of virtue and vice, of the fit and unfit. He has not only delineated the path of the strictly right, but of the amiable and becoming. He has

aimed at rendering mankind not only mutually serviceable, but mutually agreeable; and has delighted in painting true goodness with all those colors which it was said of old would make her so enchanting should she ever become visible to mortal eyes.

It will, perhaps, be expected that something should be said of Dr. Enfield in the peculiar character of a *Dissenter*. To *dissent* was by no means a part of his natural disposition; on the contrary, he could not without a struggle differ from those whom he saw dignified by station, respectable for learning and morals, and amiable in the intercourse of society. Nor was the voice of authority, when mildly and reasonably exerted, a signal to him of resistance, but rather a call to acquiescence. It is therefore not to be wondered at, that there was a period in his life when he looked towards the religious establishment of his country with a wish that no insuperable barrier should exist to the admission of those who, without violating the absolute dictates of conscience, might desire to join it. Inclined by temper and system to think well of mankind, and to entertain sanguine hopes of their progress towards truth and reason, he could not bring himself to imagine that the active efforts (which we may all remember) of many excellent persons to produce a further reform in the English

church, and render the terms of entrance into its ministry more easy and liberal, would in the end fail of their effect. This idea dwelt long and weightily on his mind, and disposed him rather to regard the conformities, than the differences, between systems which he expected to see continually more nearly approaching each other. Moreover, the correct and elegant language, and the manly strain of morality, which then characterised the pulpit compositions of the most eminent of the clergy, commanded his entire approbation; and he thought that a mutual oblivion of topics of controversy might take place, from a consent in all friends of rational religion to confine their public discourses to subjects on which no differences existed between them. He lived, however, to see all his expectations of this amicable union frustrated—to see hierarchical claims maintained more dogmatically than before—and the chief stress of religion placed upon those doctrines in which the English church-articles most differ from the opinions of that class of dissenters to which he belonged. He lived, therefore, to become a more decided separatist than ever; and I am sure, that for many years before his death, though all his personal candor and good-will towards the opposite party remained, no consideration would have induced him to range himself under its banners.

The rights of private judgement and public discussion, and all the fundamental points of civil and religious liberty, were become more and more dear to him; and he asserted them with a courage and zeal which seemed scarcely to belong to his habitual temper. A very manly discourse, which he published in 1788, on the hundredth anniversary of the revolution, sufficiently testifies his sentiments on these important subjects.

It is now time to return to biographical narrative. In 1785, receiving an invitation from the congregation of the Octagon chapel at Norwich, a society with whom any man might esteem it an honor and happiness to be connected, he accepted it, under the condition of residing at a small distance from the city, and continuing his plan of domestic tuition. He first settled at the pleasant village of Thorpe; but at length he found it more convenient to remove to Norwich itself. Though he was eminently happy in his mode of educating a small number, of which several striking examples might be adduced; yet, like most who have adopted that plan, he found that the difficulty of keeping up a regular supply of pupils, and the unpleasant restraint arising from a party of young men, so far domiciliated, that they left neither time nor place for family privacy, more than compensated the advantages to be derived

from such an employment of his talents. He finally removed, therefore, to a smaller habitation, entirely declined receiving boarders, and only gave private instructions to two or three select pupils a few hours in the forenoon. At length he determined to be perfectly master of his own time, and to give to his family, friends, and spontaneous literary pursuits, all the leisure he possessed from his professional duties. The circumstances of his family confirmed him in this resolution. He was the father of two sons and three daughters, all educated under his own eye; and had he had no other examples to produce of his power of making himself at the same time a friend and a tutor—of conciliating the most tender affection with ready and undeviating obedience—his children would, by all who knew them, be admitted as sufficient proofs of this happy art. They became every thing that their parents could wish;—but the eldest son, after passing with uncommon reputation through his clerkship to an attorney (Mr. Roscoe of Liverpool), and advancing so far in his professional career as to be appointed, when just of age, town-clerk of Nottingham, was suddenly snatched away by a fever. The doctor bore his grievous loss with exemplary resignation; but the struggle produced effects on his health which alarmed his friends. Symptoms resembling those

of the fatal disease termed *angina pectoris* came on; indeed, it may be said that he really labored under an incipient state of this disorder. But time, medicine, and happier subjects of reflection, restored him to health and cheerfulness. He had the felicity of seeing two of his daughters most desirably settled in marriage. His remaining son bid fair to become all that the other had been. He was, therefore, fully entitled to enjoy himself in the domestic freedom he loved, and to confine his future exertions to those lettered employments which, to one of his industrious habits, were necessary to give a zest to social relaxation.

He had not yet completely detached himself from the business of tuition, when he undertook the most laborious of his literary tasks, an abridgement of *Brucker's History of Philosophy*. This work appeared in two volumes 4to in the year 1791, and would alone have been sufficient to establish the writer's character as a master of the middle style of composition, and as a judicious selector of what was most valuable in the representation of manners and opinions. The original work has obtained a high reputation among the learned, for the depth of its researches, and the liberality of its spirit; but its Latin style is involved and prolix, and the heaviness that pervades the whole has rendered it rather a book for occa-

sional consultation than for direct perusal. Dr. Enfield's abridgement is a work equally instructive and agreeable; and it may be pronounced that the tenets of all the leading sects of philosophers were never before, in the English language, displayed with such elegance and perspicuity. It was, indeed, his peculiar talent to arrange and express other men's ideas to the greatest advantage. His style, chaste, clear, correct, free from all affectation and singularity, was proper for all topics; and the spirit of method and order which reigned in his own mind, communicated itself to every subject which he touched upon. These qualities, together with that candor which was interwoven in his very constitution, especially fitted him to take a part in a literary journal; and to one of the most respectable of these works he was long a considerable contributor. The institution of a new magazine, under the name of the *Monthly*, which in its plan embraced a larger circle of original literature than usual with these miscellanies, engaged him to exercise his powers as an essayist on a variety of topics; and the papers with which he enriched it, under the title of *The Inquirer*, obtained great applause from the manly freedom of their sentiments, and the correct elegance of their language.

Thus did his latter years glide on, tranquil and

serene, in the bosom of domestic comfort, surrounded by friends to whom he became continually more dear, and in the midst of agreeable occupations. So well confirmed did his health appear, and so much did he feel himself in the full vigor and maturity of his powers, that he did not hesitate, in the year 1796, to associate himself with the writer of this account, one of his oldest and most intimate companions, in a literary undertaking of great magnitude, which looked to a distant period for its completion. Were it not the duty of mortals to employ their talents in the way they can approve, without regarding contingencies which they can neither foresee nor overrule, such an engagement, in persons descending into the vale of years, might be accused of presumption; but it implied in them no more than a resolution to act with diligence as long as they should be permitted to act—to work while it is called to-day, mindful of that approaching night when no man can work. The composition, that of a *General Biographical Dictionary*, proved so agreeable to Dr. Enfield, that he was often heard to say his hours of study had never passed so pleasantly with him; and the progress he made was proportioned to his industry and good-will. Everycircumstance seemed to promise him years of comfort in store. He was happy himself, and im-

parted that happiness to all who came within the sphere of his influence. But an incurable disease was in the mean time making unsuspected advances. A scirrhous contraction of the rectum, denoting itself only by symptoms which he did not understand, and which, therefore, he imperfectly described to his medical friends, was preparing, without pain or general disease, to effect a sudden and irresistible change. The very day before this disorder manifested itself he was complimented on his cheerful spirits and healthy looks, and himself confessed that he had nothing, bodily or mental, of which he ought to complain. But the obstruction was now formed. A sickness came on, the proper functions of the intestines were suspended, nothing was able to give relief; and after a week, passed rather in constant uneasiness than in acute pain, with his faculties entire nearly to the last, foreseeing the fatal event, and meeting it with manly fortitude, he sunk in the arms of his children and friends, and expired without a struggle. This catastrophe took place on November 3, 1797, in the fifty-seventh year of his life. The deep regrets of all who knew him—of those the most to whom he was best known—render it unnecessary to enter into any further description of a character, the essence of which was *to be amiable*. A man's writings have often

proved very inadequate tests of his dispositions. Those of Dr. Enfield, however, are not. They breathe the very s prit of his gentle and generous soul. He loved mankind, and wished nothing so much as to render them the worthy objects of love. This is the leading character of those of his discourses which have been selected for publication; as it is, indeed, of all he composed. May their effect equal the most sanguine wishes of their benevolent author!

(C) p. 212.

DESCRIPTION

OF

THE COUNTRY ABOUT DORKING.

IT is a sufficiently trite remark, that objects of admiration and curiosity near at hand are commonly neglected for those at a distance; and that even their existence is often unknown to those who might become spectators of them any day of their lives. I was never more struck with the truth of this observation, than on a late residence for some weeks at Dorking, in Surrey, the vicinity of which place affords scenes not only of such uncommon beauty, but of so romantic a cast, as few would expect to meet with so near the metropolis. I should probably have made use of the term *picturesque* to characterise the general scenery of this district, had I not been fully convinced by the ingenious Mr. Gilpin, that this word loses all true meaning the instant we deviate from its etymological definition, that of "fitness for pictured representation." Now, being myself but a very inade-

quate judge of this point; and, moreover, considering it as a manifest degradation of natural beauty and sublimity to submit their merit to the test of the capacity of art to copy them, I shall rather obliterate from my descriptive vocabulary an epithet, however fashionable, than employ it without distinct ideas.

The tract of which I mean to attempt a slight sketch, may be reckoned to commence at the pleasant village of Leatherhead, whence a narrow valley extends southwards, forming the bed of the small river Mole, in its course from the foot of Box-hill. The western side of this valley is composed of a chain of heights, the principal part of which is comprehended in the precincts of Norbury-park. To them succeed the hills of Ranmer and Denbeighs, which last bends round to join the long ridge running towards Guilford. The eastern side of this valley is formed by the rising grounds of Leatherhead and Mickleham Downs, and finally by Box-hill, which, like its opposite Denbeighs, sweeps round to form the ridge running on to Ryegate, and thence quite into Kent. Thus, the vale of Leatherhead, after a course of about four miles, terminates perpendicularly in another vale, opening on each hand from the town of Dorking, and extending many miles in an eastern and western direction. The river Mole,

entering Leatherhead-vale from the foot of Box-hill, and meandering through it from side to side, bestows on it a beautiful verdure and rich vegetation, though from its narrowness and scanty supply of water, it contributes little to the landscape.

Many are the elegant seats and pleasant farms and cottages which decorate this delightful vale; but its two capital objects are Norbury-park on one hand, and Box-hill on the other. *Norbury-park* is well known as the domain of Mr. Locke, a gentleman highly celebrated for the elegance and correctness of his taste. It is fortunate that a tract so favored by nature should have fallen to the lot of a master capable of giving it all the advantages of art, in a style perfectly correspondent with its natural character. The grounds of Norbury consist of rich meadows bordering on the Mole, and abruptly terminating in the steep green sides of a range of irregular eminences, of considerable height, and uniting into a common level at the top. Chalk hills, of which kind are those in question, have commonly a grotesque singularity in their outline. They give the idea of having been formed by vast masses of liquid mortar, poured along over a plain, and at once setting into solidity. Hence, with a general rotundity of shape, the edges are composed of unequal promi-

nences, pushing into or retiring from the subjacent low grounds, and separated from each other by deep narrow ravines. Such is the surface nature has given to Norbury-park. Art has contributed the dress and decoration by means of planting; and this has been managed so as to produce the most striking effects. The bottom of meadow is besprinkled with fine trees, partly following the windings of the river, partly forming rows or avenues, and partly scattered without obvious order. The bold ascents, consisting of round knolls and amphitheatrical sweeps, are for the most part left in their natural nakedness; but the ravines are filled up with shrubs and trees, which shade all deformities, and add great softness and richness to the whole. The summit of the eminence is crowned by noble masses of trees, expanding into full luxuriance, and appearing either as detached groups, or long connected ranges, according to the points whence they are viewed. In the midst of these, on the very edge of a commanding brow, the house is placed; an edifice of striking though not quite regular architecture, and well fitted to reign over the domain in which it is placed. Some fine larches planted near it just on the descent stamp it with somewhat of an alpine character, which its elevation above the vale, and the great variety and extent

of prospect visible from it, enable it to maintain. The level plain around the house is a lawn interspersed with timber, chiefly beech, disposed either in grand clumps, or in single trees of vast magnitude, filling the eye with the gigantic rotundity of their forms. The planting is so managed that the lawn seems to terminate all round in a close wood, of which the boundaries are not discoverable. From the house extends a sort of terrace on the brow of the eminence, which at length leads to a thick plantation clothing the steep sides of a precipitous declivity. Through this are led rides and walks, presenting sylvan scenes of exquisite beauty, in which the beeches, drawn up to a vast height with straight unbranched trunks, acquire a character of airy elegance, totally different from the massy roundness of this tree when suffered to expand without interruption. A very beautiful appendage to the planting of Norbury, not readily discoverable by a stranger, is a close walk round a coppice or plantation on the back of the park, formed of young trees, among which the pendent birch is one of the most frequent. This walk winds round in the most free and graceful curves, by which the view is successively lost in foliage, and again recovered in long reaches. The trees on each hand form a skreen, just thick enough to exclude surrounding objects, yet ad-

mitting a soft and chequered light, the effect of which is rather cheerful than gloomy. In many places the trees arch over at the top. Here and there, in peculiarly happy situations, views are opened into the surrounding country; but these do not impair the leading character of the walk, which is that of perfect retirement. I do not recollect ever to have felt a sweeter emotion of the kind, than when accident first led me to this sequestered spot.

In the descriptions of celebrated places, I think the distinction is seldom clearly made between the scenes they themselves afford, and the prospects to be viewed from them. Yet this is a distinction obvious and material. Some spots, if denuded of every ornament of their own, and left merely in a state of nature, would be eagerly resorted to as stations whence surrounding beauties might be viewed to the greatest advantage. Others, like the spots of verdure in an African desert, contain within themselves all the charms they have to boast. The happiest situations combine both these circumstances; but rarely in equal proportions. Norbury-park, naturally a sterile soil, has been rendered, chiefly by exquisite skill in planting, a fine object in itself; but the prospects from it are beauties gratuitously bestowed upon its local situation, which perhaps contribute most to its pre-

eminence among the seats in its neighbourhood. From the houses and the whole crest of the eminence on which it is placed, successive views open of the subjacent valley and the remoter distances, scarcely to be paralleled for their gay variety and finished softness. Northwards, Leatherhead, with the variegated country beyond it extending towards Kingston and Epsom;—directly opposite, the charming village of Mickelham, backed by its fine green downs;—onwards to the south-east, the seat of Sir Lucas Pepys, apparently lying upon the bosom of a steep pine-clad hill, of truly alpine character;—somewhat further, Box-hill, presenting its precipitous side, partly disclosing bare and craggy spots of chalk, partly clothed with its proper shrub, of peculiar hue;—beyond it, the richly wooded eminences of parks and seats near Dorking, bending round to the south, and terminating an intermediate vale of perfect beauty, divided to the eye by the aid of planting into separate portions, made more or less extensive at pleasure, and forming landscapes which I should have called singularly picturesque, had I not doubted of the power of painting to give any adequate idea of scenes lying in such a striking manner immediately beneath the sight. Mr. Gilpin, in his late Western Tour, has given a sketch of the prospects from Norbury; and from his re-

marks may be gathered how they appear to an eye in search of the true *picturesque*. I believe, however, that a more untaught spectator, gratified with the charms of nature, without referring them to a remoter test, would receive from them a purer delight. Mr. Locke's celebrated *painted room* is, in fact, the subject of much more of Mr. Gilpin's description than the park itself. This room, presenting a fine landscape on each of its sides, together with the decorations of figures, foliage, flowers, &c. is, I doubt not, an extraordinary work of art; but placed as it is, the effect upon my feelings was that of a proof of the infinite superiority of real to pictured scenery; and the burst of splendor poured in at the windows almost entirely extinguished to my eye the magic lights of Barrett's pencil. I could not help wishing, that the cost bestowed upon this piece of painting had rather been devoted to some architectural ornaments out of doors; since the style of cultured beauty prevalent in Norbury-park would, in my opinion, admit with advantage a judicious intermixture of such decoration, though it cannot be said absolutely to require it. The only attempt at an edifice is a thatched plaster building with green window-shutters, the appearance of which, in one of the most commanding sites of the park, is, in my judgement, wholly incongruous. And

there is nothing in which the modern English taste seems to me so faulty, as in the custom of placing mean and rustic buildings in the midst of scenes certainly not intended to convey the idea of the absence of art and expense. This *love of simplicity* has, in various other particulars, injured our national taste; and has produced incongruities in our style of poetry and oratory, as well as in our external decorations.

I have already mentioned Box-hill as the other great feature of the vale I am describing. It is indeed the most striking object of this part of the country, and best known as a popular curiosity. It comprehends a considerable space, being composed of three or four smooth green ridges, separated from each other by narrow dells, and uniting at the summit into one lofty wooded top. On the side facing the vale of Leatherhead, its descent is not much short of perpendicular, forming a kind of chalky crag, naked and crumbling where not bound by the box-trees and other shrubs, which in most parts give it a rich and thick covering. Its foot is bathed in the Mole, abruptly terminating its declivity, and giving it a fringe of aquatic trees and verdant meadows. Its peculiarity arises from its resemblance to the bold broken crags of mountainous countries; which, however, it only holds on this side; for where it

bends round to join the Ryegate ridge of chalk hills, it puts on the same rotundity of form with the rest. Its crest affords a walk uncommonly striking; winding through the plantations of box, and at the openings affording bird's eye views of all the charms, as well of the Leatherhead Vale, as of that much longer one in which the former terminates. It is difficult to determine whether this romantic hill produces a greater effect as an object from the subjacent vale, or as a station for a prospect. The point of view whence the hill itself is the most striking spectacle, is from the very elegant cottage and grounds of Mr. Barclay, seated directly beneath it. The vast perpendicular wall of verdure, forming a side-skreen to those grounds, has an effect of real sublimity as well as uncommon beauty; and a similar happy circumstance is perhaps scarcely to be met with in any other ornamental scene. The waters of the Mole are commonly said to sink into the ground under Box-hill. No interruption of the stream, however, is to be observed at the foot of the hill itself; though after it has passed Burford-bridge, in its course through Norbury-park, there are several such interruptions.

The map of Surrey will show a remarkable ridge running across the county, quite from the border of Hampshire to Kent, near the centre of

which the town of Dorking is situated. This is a range of chalk or limestone hills, the general nature and appearance of which I have already described. From Dorking it may be seen running on one hand to the neighbourhood of Guilford, on the other beyond Ryegate. This ridge forms one side or wall of a long valley. It is for the most part naked, and of steep ascent; broken into a chain of separate rounded eminences, and here and there displaying the nature of its soil by chalk pits, which have been opened in different parts of it. The other side of the valley is much less distinctly marked, consisting of scattered eminences, approaching or receding, mostly clothed with wood, and by their breaks affording frequent openings into the southern parts of Surrey. The vale, however, is, upon the whole, sufficiently marked by the streams which run along it, and which are, the Mole, coming from the neighbourhood of Ryegate, and turning short round the foot of Box-hill; Pitt-brook, flowing from the west under Dorking, and at length terminating in the Mole; and another brook which flows in a contrary direction towards Guilford. These brooks are enlivened by a number of mills; and a tract of verdant meadows accompanies their course.

The continuation of Box-hill towards Ryegate consists of naked round eminences, the sterile ap-

pearance of which serves as a striking contrast to the richness of the vale below. The first object immediately beneath them is Beachworth castle and park, now the property of —— Peters, Esq. This is an ancient seat, chiefly remarkable for the noble timber belonging to it. Approaching it from Dorking, the road leads through an outer park, skirted with rows of old chesnut trees, of large dimensions, and of forms which perhaps a painter would rather denominate grotesque than picturesque. The peculiar manner in which this tree sends off its branches, making elbows and sharp angles, and often crossing each other in the most irregular lines, gives it a very singular character: but, on the whole, the chesnuts of Beachworth impress the beholder with extraordinary ideas of gigantic greatness. The inner park, at the extremity of which the house is situated, has two fine avenues, the one of elm trees, the other of limes, the tallest I ever beheld. This last is a triple avenue, resembling the nave of a cathedral, but greatly surpassing in grandeur the works of human hands. The trees touch each other with their branches, forming on the outside a vast screen, or wall of verdure. Within, the branches, meeting at a great height in the air from the opposite sides of the rows, form Gothic arches, and exclude every ray of the meridian sun. I never

felt a stronger impression of awful gloom than on entering these solemn walks in the dusk of evening. The river Mole, washing the edge of Beachworth park, has in some parts a respectable breadth, and is beautifully shaded with aquatic trees and bushes.

A very little to the south of Beachworth-park lies Chart, the pleasing seat and grounds of Mrs. Cornwall. The former inhabitant was Abraham Tucker, Esq. well-known for his acute metaphysical writings, under the name of Search. Chart-park is of no great extent; but the ground in it is strikingly varied in its surface, and has been planted with great taste. Its steep summits are crowned with trees of various kinds. The house, a plain white building, lies low. Close behind it the ground rises abruptly to a terrace, planted with a line of beeches, and affording fine views of the adjacent country. Some remarkably large plane trees decorate the slope; and on one hand is a rookery on the top of some lofty pines. Mrs. Cornwall cultivates many curious plants, and her shrubbery is furnished with some beautiful exotics in high perfection. Joining to Chart-park, on the side of Dorking, are the elegant woods and grounds of the house of Lady Burrell, a large modern brick edifice, which forms a conspicuous object in the views of that town. The

series of irregular heights which compose the southern side of the vale formerly mentioned, next leads to an eminence marked by a clump of firs, and commonly called Dorking's Glory. This is a very happy station for a prospect, commanding not only the vales of Leatherhead and Dorking, but a long tract of the southern part of Surrey, extending to the borders of Sussex. Passing westwards, behind the town of Dorking, the chain of elevated ground leads to Berry-hill, a seat belonging to Lord Grimston, now in the occupancy of George Shum, Esq. A low ridge of hill, loosely planted with wood, terminates in a thick dark fir plantation, just behind which, fronting the south, stands the house. This is an edifice of more show and architectural pretension than those of the other seats in the neighbourhood; and by the complete shelter it receives from the north and east, and its exposure to a southern sun, must enjoy a full share of all the warmth this climate can boast. Before it is a handsome piece of water, artificially made at great cost; and beyond, the view terminates in some bold eminences crowned with fir and larch. The character of this seat is elegance united with the true English charm of snugness. It seems rather calculated for the enjoyment of the owner, than the gaze of the spectator.

About a mile westward from hence, on the lower Guilford road, is the Rookery, the villa of Richard Fuller, Esq. This delightful place occupies one of those dells which descend from the south into the long vale we have above described, each serving as the bed of a little stream. The imagination can scarcely conceive a scene of the kind more complete than this. The dell, at a distance, appears like a break or chasm between two hills, entirely filled with wood. On entering it, however, there is found to be room for a sweet verdant meadow, containing a stream which descends in several little falls (rather too artificial) and turns a mill near the house. The house itself, a plain white building in a kind of antique style of architecture, stands upon a sloping bank, having directly opposite to it a bold eminence finely planted with trees, and subsiding in a green lawn. The stream, now widened, runs between ; and, a little higher, expands into an extensive pool, shaded on all sides with trees and shrubs to the water's edge, and winding out of sight. A narrow strip of green lawn bordering the water, spreading at length into a small meadow, forms all the rest of the grounds which is not occupied with wood. Plantations of beeches and other tall timber trees fill the remaining space, insulating (as it were) the whole with a belt of forest scenery, and securing

to it a character of coolness and sequestered retreat, which no other place that I have seen possesses in an equal degree. The hottest and most sunny season of the year seems the time for enjoying this place to full advantage. In dark and chilly weather, it must probably appear to superabound with shade and moisture; yet the site of the house is tolerably cheerful and open.

A little to the south-west of the Rookery, another dell descends in the same direction, called by the appropriate name of Valley Lonesome. This is occupied by the house and grounds of Mr. Haynes, and presents a scene considerably different from any yet described. The house, an elegant piece of architecture, appears, by a *jet d'eau* playing in front, with two equidistant bridges, and various ornamental appendages, disposed with perfect correspondence and regularity, to have been planned before the modern taste of rural decoration took place. The stream flowing through the valley is made to put on a variety of forms in basons, falls, channels, &c. which are rather trifling; but a cascade, really of some effect, bursts out from a high bank which borders the vale, though the steps or ledges down which the water is made to fall, and the round stone-bason which at last receives it, give it too formal an appearance. The general character of Valley Lone-

some is gay and cheerful, notwithstanding its sequestered situation. Its upper end terminates in that wild tract, which, at length becoming a black naked moor, rises into the celebrated Leith-Hill. The ascent on this side is very gentle; and the elevation would scarcely be suspected, were it not for the very extensive prospect that bursts on the sight at the further extremity. A tower, now in a ruinous state, marks the spot most favorable for the view. The southern part of Surrey, and a vast reach into Kent and Sussex, particularly the latter county, bounded by the line of elevated downs, compose the field of this extensive prospect, which is rather striking from its extent alone, than from any peculiar beauty or singularity of the detached parts. A flat and tolerably wooded country reaches to the downs; which last afford a wavy horizon, broken in some places by gaps; through one of which the sea, near Shoreham, may in clear weather be discerned by the aid of a glass. In a line with Leith-hill are other high moors, stretching away to the western side of Surrey. Returning from Leith-hill, a long and singular avenue of firs, planted in small clumps at regular distances, leads to the main valley we have left, by the back of the noble woods and plantations surrounding the seat of Sir Frederick Evelyn at Wotton. The seat itself is an ordinary

house, strangely placed in a bottom; but few mansions can boast of such an imposing accompaniment of lofty groves and thick woods, filling and characterising a large tract of land.

In order to bring our tour round Dorking within moderate compass, we will now take our course from Sir Frederick's straight to the chalky ridge we have so long left; and ascending it, proceed over Ranmer common to Denbeighs, the seat of Mr. Denison, impending over the town of Dorking, to which it affords one of its most conspicuous objects. This house was built by Mr. Tyers, first proprietor of Vauxhall, who transported to it many of the ideas of his public gardens, dark walks, temples, theatrical deceptions, ruins, monuments, and the like. These have been mostly removed, or suffered to go to decay; but there remains on one side of the house a fine green terrace, backed with trees; and on the other a close plantation of considerable extent, crowning the verge of the hill. Though taste has done much less for this place than for Norbury park, yet it may be questioned, whether its site be not equally advantageous, and the prospect it commands equally striking, with respect to variety and beauty. Almost all the places we have been describing lie within its view; to which may be added the town of Dorking, and all the lesser charms of the sub-

jacent valley. Its descent to Dorking is very steep; and the road passes by some extensive chalk-pits, which are continually wrought, and furnish a lime in great esteem for its property of hardening under water.

It would be easy to enlarge the list of beautiful scenes in this neighbourhood, all within the reach of a morning's walk or ride, and affording a source of daily variety for several weeks. The purity of the air, the fragrance from an exuberance of aromatic plants and shrubs, the music from numberless birds, the choice of sheltered or open country, the liberty of wandering without obstacle or question through the most cultured scenes, and the perfect repose which reigns all around, unite to render this tract of country one of the most delightful to the contemplative man, and the most salutary to the invalid, that I have ever visited.

(D) p. 235.

BIOGRAPHICAL ACCOUNT

OF

THE LATE DR. PULTENEY.

RICHARD PULTENEY, M.D. F.R.S. L. and E., was born in the year 1730 at Loughborough, in Leicestershire. His parents had thirteen children, of whom he alone arrived at the age of maturity. From early youth he was of a delicate habit, and supposed to be inclined to a consumption; and it was by means of rigid temperance, which he observed during his whole life, that he maintained himself in a tolerable state of health. He has recorded (in Mr. Nichols's *History of Leicestershire*) his obligations to his uncle, Mr. George Tomlinson, of Hathern, who possessed some property in that village, and adorned an obscure station with virtue and science. "Those (says Dr. Pulteney) who remember and intimately knew the subject of this memoir, will not, it is believed, judge it otherwise than impartial,

though, confessedly, a tribute from his nearest relative, one who reveres his memory with the truest affection, who, through the early stage of life, received from him, as from a father, the genuine dictates of wisdom, virtue, and religion; all of which were truly exemplified in his own conduct throughout the whole of his life." From this relation he imbibed his taste for botanical studies; and it was probably through his instigation that he was destined to the medical profession.

The youth's first situation in a professional capacity was that of apprentice to an apothecary in Loughborough; an humble school, which, however, his industry and talent for observation were able to render instructive. He passed through the usual course of a country education, and then complied with an invitation to settle at Leicester. That town, like most provincial capitals, was divided into two political and religious parties; and it was that of the dissenters (to which his parents belonged) whence Mr. Pulteney received his support. His sphere was still further narrowed, by the limitation of practising only as an apothecary; for it was thought due to the consequence of the party, to possess a surgeon of their own as a separate professional character, which office was filled by Mr. Cogan, a man of merit and agreeable manners.

Few remarks can be necessary on the hardship of placing persons of abilities and liberal sentiments in situations so unfavorable to the acquirement of that reputation and those emoluments which are justly due to professional superiority; and in which they must be reduced to an unworthy and degrading dependence upon a few party-leaders!

Mr. Pulteney was of a timid and cautious disposition; and, though his mind was by no means formed for shackles, his temper was not firm enough to enable him effectually to assert his freedom. It would be an unpleasant task to dwell upon the share he had in those "scorns which patient merit of the unworthy takes;" or of the struggle he maintained with narrow circumstances, which obliged him to contract habits of rigid œconomy, rendered more necessary by the passion for buying books, to which he was content to sacrifice every other inclination. Science was, indeed, his great resource under the discouragements of his situation, and it eventually proved the means of raising him from obscurity. To his private friends he was known as one who had inquired largely and thought freely on a variety of topics. To the public he first appeared as a votary of the pleasing study of botany. He became a correspondent of the *Gentleman's Magazine* at

an early period; and communicated to it, anonymously, a series of valuable letters concerning the poisonous plants of this country, and a dissertation on Fungi, contained in the xxvth volume of that miscellany. To the same publication he sent, in 1757, a translation of a curious paper in the Upsal *Amœnitates Academicæ* on "the Sleep of Plants." This subject he pursued more at large in a paper inserted in the lth volume of the *Philosophical Transactions*, for 1758, entitled "Observations on the Sleep of Plants, with an Enumeration of several Plants which are subject to that Law." He had before appeared among the contributors to the *Philosophical Transactions* by a "Catalogue of the rare Plants of Leicestershire, with Botanical and Medical Observations;" vol. xlix. for 1756. This paper he gave to Mr. Nichols, in an improved state, in 1795, who has inserted it in the first volume of his history of that county. In 1758 he printed, in the *Gentleman's Magazine*, a translation from the same Amœnitates, of the instructive paper entitled "Pan Suecus," giving a catalogue of plants which, from experiment, were found to be either chosen or rejected as food by the different species of domestic quadrupeds. This he adapted more particularly to English readers by referring to English authors; and he subjoined to it some notes and observations. Its

utility caused him afterwards to annex it, in a more enlarged form, to his "View of the Writings of Linnæus."

He distinguished himself in a manner more purely professional by a paper published in the *Philosophical Transactions*, vol. lii. for 1761, giving an account of a singular medical case attended with palpitation of the heart and other uncommon symptoms, and which, upon dissection, exhibited a preternatural enlargement of that organ. In 1762 he received the honor of being elected a fellow of the Royal Society. His name was now associated to those of men of science in various departments; and his personal merits were becoming known to a wider circle of acquaintance, to whom he was endeared by his modest worth, and the good sense and discretion which peculiarly characterised him. Nor can it be doubted, that, even with his original disadvantages of situation, he would have attained a respectable share of business at Leicester, though still in that inferior branch of the profession on which he had at first entered, to which, however, he had added the practice of midwifery. But it was his lot to possess a friend whose ardent and enterprising spirit was an admirable corrective of his own diffidence, and who esteemed him too much to acquiesce in his continuing in a rank and employment beneath

his merits. This was Mr. Maxwell Garthshore, then eminent in medical practice at Uppingham, in Rutlandshire. By means of a common friend, much revered by both, they were made acquainted in the year 1758, and this acquaintance soon ripened into a warmth of friendship which death alone could extinguish. As it was Mr. Garthshore's own plan, after a residence for some years at Uppingham, to take the degree of doctor at Edinburgh, where he had received his medical education, he strongly urged Mr. Pulteney to accompany him thither, and offer himself to the examinations of the university, though he had never enjoyed the advantage of academical instruction there or elsewhere. His reluctance was at length overcome; and the two friends set out upon their expedition in the spring of 1764. Mr. Pulteney was already known by reputation at Edinburgh, particularly to Dr. Hope, the professor of Botany; and he had the benefit of his companion's extensive connections in the place. He passed through all the necessary preliminaries with credit, and in May received the honors of graduation. The subject of his inaugural dissertation was "De Cinchona," or, On the Peruvian Bark; of the natural and medical history of which important article he gave a very satisfactory and instructive account. The botanical description is

particularly accurate, and is illustrated by a plate; and his Thesis has been thought worthy of reprinting in a collection of the most valuable compositions of the kind which the medical school of Edinburgh has produced.

A circumstance relative to his graduation, honorable to himself, but affording matter of reflection relative to the conduct of public bodies, ought not to be passed over in silence. The university of Edinburgh had now for a considerable time been rising in reputation as a school of medicine, and its degrees in that faculty became of course more and more respectable. It is well known that the universities of Scotland, modelled upon those of the continent, have adopted the practice of conferring degrees upon examination, without requiring in the candidates a previous residence in their own seminary, or, indeed, in any other. In some of them the examination itself has been dispensed with, and the requested distinction has been bestowed upon persons at a distance, in consequence of mere recommendation. It is no wonder that such a laxity should have thrown occasional discredit upon academical honors; nor that the public should have been prone to confound the degrees conferred at universities similarly constituted, in one general note of disesteem. The Edinburgh medical students justly

considered themselves entitled to be regarded among those of the profession who had received the greatest advantages of education, and were the most deserving of those testimonials of competency which titular distinctions imply. They had therefore begun to remonstrate against a mode of conferring degrees which might confound them with persons altogether unworthy of the honor; and their discontent had been aggravated by some late instances of notorious incapacity in Edinburgh doctors by favor. Thinking their complaints not sufficiently attended to, some of the students of the longest standing had entered into a mutual engagement publicly to oppose every future attempt at decorating with the degree of doctor of physic at Edinburgh any person who should not have studied there, and to take their own degrees elsewhere in case their opposition should prove unsuccessful.

It happened that Mr. Pulteney was the first candidate under these circumstances, after this resolution was adopted. The subscribers handsomely expressed to him their concern that a person of his acknowledged merit should be the object of their opposition; but they adhered to their determination. His reputation and interest carried him through the contest; but he was (I

believe) the last in favor of whom the condition of studying at that individual seminary has been violated. And so sensible have the Edinburgh professors since become, that augmenting the credit of their university's degrees, and the difficulty of obtaining them, was conducive to their own personal emolument, that they have extended the period of requisite study there from two to three years, and made it comprehend every set of lectures which can possibly be construed as belonging to a complete medical course!

As Dr. Pulteney had now assumed a new rank in the profession, it was advisable that he should look out for a new situation. The first plan which suggested itself to his London friends, was to procure him an introduction to the celebrated earl of Bath, then in a very declining state of health. This was effected; and the earl, upon inspection of his pedigree, recognised his descent from the ancient family of which his own was a branch. He also, upon conversing with him, was so favorably impressed with his professional and literary merits, that he resolved to attach him to himself in the character of domestic physician. He proposed to settle upon him an appointment of 400*l.* per annum; and the connection would probably have been attended with mutual satisfaction and

advantage, had not the death of the earl followed so speedily that Dr. Pulteney received only one quarterly advance of his intended salary.

Not long after this event, a medical vacancy happening at Blandford, in Dorsetshire, he was urged by Dr. Watson, Dr. Baker, and others of his friends, to go down and occupy it. Provided with their warm recommendations, but an utter stranger to all the inhabitants of the town and its vicinity, he fixed his abode in that spot which was to be his residence during the whole remainder of his life. A small country town, in the midst of a neighbourhood composed of the usual ingredients of provincial society, was not, perhaps, exactly the situation most desirable to a man whose mind was enlarged by free speculation and scientific pursuit: but it was now Dr. Pulteney's business to establish himself in his profession; and to that object, prudence required that sacrifices should be made. This is, indeed, the condition of all who have their way to make in the world; and perhaps a just sense of true dignity of character, as well as regard to pecuniary advantage, should lead a man to place before him, as his *primary object*, the attainment of success in the profession which he has chosen; and to consider as secondary and subordinate all reputation or gratification derived from other sources. Dr.

Pulteney, therefore, seems to have sat down with the resolution, not only of fulfilling his medical duties with the utmost punctuality, but of avoiding every thing which might in the least degree involve him in differences with those on whose good opinion he was to depend. He was sensible that by his removal he had entirely *changed his latitude;* and though he was not a man to shift his sentiments and language according to his company, yet he was constitutionally cautious, and could, without much effort, practise the allowable policy of silence. "Commune with thy heart and be still," was the maxim of 36 years of his life. That it exerted its natural influence upon his character, will not be denied; but it did not prevent him from being a very amiable, useful, and respectable member of society.

The situation of Blandford had not hitherto afforded any great scope for medical practice; but Dr. Pulteney soon extended its limits. His reputation spread through the circumjacent country, and he received professional calls from the market and trading towns in a compass of twenty or thirty miles round his centre, as well as from many of the country families of principal distinction in that part of the kingdom. As his industry was great, and his expenses were moderate, he began to accumulate property. He continued to

live in a state of celibacy till October 1779, when he married Miss Elizabeth Galton, of Blandford. He could not have chosen more fortunately for domestic happiness; and the addition this connection made to his comforts was proportionable to the want he had previously felt of that society which alone can interest the heart. No children were the fruit of this union; but in the additional society of an amiable young relation of Mrs. Pulteney he enjoyed the pleasure of an adoptive parent.

He continued to employ his leisure in occasional writings on topics of medicine and natural history. In 1772 he addressed a letter to his friend Dr. Watson (published in the *Philosophical Transactions*, vol. lxii.) concerning the medicinal effects of the *Œnanthe crocata*, an umbelliferous plant of a poisonous nature, the juice of which was exhibited, by mistake, instead of that of the water-parsnep. In the lxviiith volume of the same collection, for 1778, he gave an accurate account of the bills of mortality for the parish of Blandford during forty years past, with observations. To the *London Medical Journal*, vol. v. he communicated an account of the poisonous effects of the Hemlock Dropwort (the *Œnanthe crocata* above mentioned).

He had hitherto appeared as an author only in

detached memoirs inserted in periodical publications. But in 1781 he ventured to offer to the public a separate volume, on a subject, indeed, with which no man could claim a more intimate acquaintance. This was "A General View of the Writings of Linnæus," 8vo. The purpose of this work was to afford an exact synopsis of all the labours of the great Swedish naturalist, who appears to have been the object of his warmest admiration. Along with the account of his works, memoirs of his life are interwoven, chiefly extracted from the different writings of Linnæus. In the prefatory advertisement Dr. Pulteney speaks with great modesty of his performance, which, however, was very well received by the friends of natural history, and obtained for him the present of a medal from Stockholm, as an acknowledgement of the justice he had done to the fame of the illustrious Swede. Many judicious observations and valuable points of information are interspersed in the work. It concludes with a synoptical account of all the papers contained in the first seven volumes of the *Amœnitates Academicæ*.

Some years afterwards a more extensive and original work proceeded from Dr. Pulteney's pen, and which must have cost him much varied research in its composition. This was his "Histo-

rical and Biographical Sketches of the Progress of Botany in England, from its Origin to the Introduction of the Linnæan System;" 2 vols. 8vo. 1790. He paid a just tribute to scientific merit in dedicating the first volume of this performance to Sir Joseph Banks; and a grateful return to long friendship, in inscribing the second to Sir George Baker and Dr. Garthshore. The work itself is highly valuable, as an example of that union of the history of men with that of an object of their common pursuit, which is so peculiarly interesting and instructive. It has likewise made an addition to national biography, which will be duly prized by those who are attached to their country's reputation. It is marked throughout with that candor and disposition to commend which always characterised the amiable author.

Whilst he was thus tracing the progress of his favorite science in books, he was by no means inattentive to the volume of nature as it lay displayed before him. The county in which he resided is considerably furnished with objects worthy the notice of the naturalist, especially in the fossil kingdom. How well he had made himself acquainted with these treasures, the present writer obtained a proof, which laid him under a particular obligation. This was a brief but masterly account of the products of Dorsetshire, communi-

cated to him for the use of his little work entitled "England Delineated." He afterwards enriched the second edition of Mr. Hutchins's "History of Dorsetshire" with a catalogue of the birds, shells, and plants observed in that county; and during his last illness he had under revisal a plate of Dorsetshire fossils communicated by himself. The formation of a musæum was the amusement of many years of his life. By gradual additions, he accumulated a store of natural productions in various classes, which was to him a perpetual source of pleasing contemplation, and will, doubtless, become to many students of nature a means of instruction, in the possession of the Linnæan Society, to which it was bequeathed.

Dr. Pulteney, in his latter years, frequently expressed a wish to retire from business, and take up his residence in the metropolis, for the sake of the scientific advantages with which it is so amply furnished; but his habits of life were become too strong to permit him to resolve upon so great a change. He continued, though with diminished ardor, to follow his professional avocations, till he was attacked with a pleuritic complaint, which, after great sufferings, put a period to his existence on October 13, 1801, at the age of 71.

By his last will he gave a signal proof of the

deep impression which his early friendships had made upon his mind, and which no subsequent connections of common acquaintance could obliterate or equal. After a handsome provision for those who on every account were entitled to the first place in his remembrance, the remaining objects of his liberality were some of the friends of his early days, and even the sons of those friends. He likewise paid a due attention to the claims of charity by bequests to the Salisbury, Leicester, and Edinburgh infirmaries, and to the poor of the parish of Blandford; and he displayed his regard to science by similar bounties to the Royal Societies of London and Edinburgh, and to the Linnæan Society.

Such are the brief memoirs which I have been able to collect concerning Dr. Pulteney; whose life affords, indeed, but little biographical variety, but presents an encouraging picture of modest merit gradually making its way to success, and science, even of the most retired kind, becoming the passport to public esteem and reputation.

(E) p. 236.

MEMOIR

OF

GILBERT WAKEFIELD, B.A.

LITERATURE has sustained a severe loss by the death of Gilbert Wakefield, B.A., carried off by a fever, in the 46th year of his age, to the unspeakable regret of his family and friends. A person in various respects so distinguished, is a proper subject for the contemplation of survivors; and he had deserved too well of the public not to be entitled to honorable and affectionate commemoration.

Mr. Wakefield, in "Memoirs of his own Life," published in 1792, has informed the world of all the circumstances attending his education and passage through life down to that period, with a minuteness and frankness which render his work a very curious and entertaining piece of biography. I shall not make any transcripts from it, but, confining myself to a slight sketch of the leading events, shall take that view of his charac-

ter and conduct which suggests itself to the reflection of a friendly but not a prejudiced bystander.

GILBERT WAKEFIELD was born on February 22, 1756, at Nottingham, of which town his father was one of the parochial clergy. An uncommon solidity and seriousness of disposition marked him from infancy, together with a power of application, and thirst after knowledge, which accelerated his progress in juvenile studies. In his grammatical course he passed under the tuition of several masters, the last and most respectable of whom was the Rev. Mr. Wooddeson, of Kingston-upon-Thames, to which parish his father had then removed. He was used, however, to lament that he had not possessed the advantages of an uniform education at one of those public schools, which undoubtedly, whatever may be their dangers and deficiencies, effect the point at which they exclusively aim, that of laying a solid foundation for classical erudition in its most exact form. In 1772 he was entered as a scholar of Jesus-college, Cambridge; and it was ever a topic of thankfulness to him, that he became a member of *that* university in which the love of truth met with some encouragement from a spirit of liberal inquiry, rather than of *that* which was devoted either to supine indolence, or to the pas-

sive inculcation of opinions sanctioned by authority. During the first years, his attention was chiefly fixed upon classical studies, always his favorites; and he was excited only by emulation and academical requisitions to aim at that proficiency in mathematical knowledge which bears so high a value at Cambridge. Yet while he confesses himself destitute of a genuine taste for speculations of this kind, he scruples not to declare the infinite superiority, in point of grandeur and sublimity, of mathematical philosophy to classical lucubrations. In 1776 he took his degree of B.A., on which occasion he was nominated to the second place among seventy-five candidates; and soon after, he was elected to a fellowship of his college. In the same year he published a small collection of Latin poems, with a few critical notes on Homer, at the University press. If not highly excellent, they were sufficient to establish the claim of a young man to more than ordinary acquaintance with the elegancies of literature. He had already obtained a knowledge of the Hebrew language, as preparatory to those theological studies which now became his most serious occupation; and it may safely be affirmed that no man ever commenced them with a mind more determined upon the unbiassed search after truth, and the open assertion of it when discover-

ed. The foundation which he laid for his inquiries was an accurate knowledge of the phraseology of the Scriptures, acquired by means of attention to the idiom in which they were written. As at this time some of his most esteemed academical friends manifested their dissatisfaction with the articles of the church of England by a conscientious refusal of subscription, it cannot be doubted that scruples on this point had already taken possession of his mind; and so far had his convictions proceeded, that he has stigmatized his compliance with the forms requisite for obtaining deacon's orders, which he received in 1778, as "the most disingenuous action of his whole life." If, indeed, he could receive consolation from the practice of others, there were several of his intimate associates, who, by a superiority to such scruples, have since risen to opulence and distinction in the church, without betraying any uneasiness for a similar acquiescence.

Mr. Wakefield left college after ordination, and engaged in a curacy at Stockport, in Cheshire, whence he afterwards removed to a similar situation in Liverpool. He performed the duties of his office with seriousness and punctuality; but his dissatisfaction with the doctrine and worship of the church continuing to increase, he probably considered his connection with it as not

likely to be durable. The disgust he felt at what he saw of the practice of privateering, and the slave-trade, in the latter place of his residence, also awakened in his mind that humane interest in the rights and happiness of his fellow-creatures, which has made so conspicuous a part of his character. The American war did not tend to augment his attachment to the political administration of his country; in short, he became altogether unfit to make one of that body, the principal business of which, in the opinion of many, seems to be, acting as the satellites of existing authority, however exerted. His marriage, in 1779, to Miss Watson, niece of the rector of Stockport, was soon followed by an invitation to undertake the post of classical tutor at the dissenting academy at Warrington, with which he complied. That he was regarded as a very valuable acquisition to this institution,—that he was exemplary in the discharge of his duty, and equally gained the attachment of his pupils, and the friendship and esteem of his colleagues,—the writer of this account can from his own knowledge attest. Being now freed from all clerical shackles, he began his career as a theological controversialist, and, it must be confessed, with an acrimony of style which was lamented by his friends, and which laid him open to the reproach

of his enemies. It is not here intended to vindicate what the writer himself cannot but disapprove; but the real and substantial kindness of Mr. Wakefield's temper, and the benevolence of his heart, were such, that this apparent contradiction must be solved by his warmth of zeal in what he thought the cause of truth, and perhaps by a familiarity with scholastic debates, which rendered him in some measure callous to the use, or rather abuse, of vituperative expressions from the press. In disputations by word of mouth no man was more calm and gentle, more patient in hearing, or more placid in replying; and if, in his writings, he has without hesitation or delicacy bestowed his censures, he has been equally liberal and decided in his praise. His applauses evidently came from the heart, free and unstinted, for envy did not possess a single particle in his composition; nor has he withheld them when he thought them deserved by particular laudable qualities, even in characters which he could not regard with general approbation. No man, perhaps, ever more fully gave way to the openness of his disposition in speaking *the whole truth* concerning men and things, unmoved by common considerations; whence it is not to be wondered at, that he frequently rendered himself more obnoxious to antagonists than the case essentially

required, and roused prejudices which a more guarded conduct would have left dormant. A sentence which, in his Memoirs, he has quoted from Asgill, expresses (as it was probably meant to do) the spirit with which he wrote. "A blunt author in pursuit of truth, *knows no man* after the flesh, till his chace is over. For a man to *think* what he *writes*, may bespeak his *prudence:* but to *write* what he *thinks*, best opens his principles."

We shall not in this sketch attempt to give an account of all his publications, many of them small in bulk and temporary in their application. The most important of his theological labors will be allowed to be those in which he employs his eminent erudition in the explanation of Scripture. Of these, the first was "A New Translation of the First Epistle of Paul, the Apostle, to the Thessalonians," printed in 1781. It was followed in the next year by "A New Translation of St. Matthew, with Notes, critical, philological, and explanatory," 4to; a work which obtained much applause, and amply displayed the extent of his reading, and the facility with which his memory called up its reposited stores for the purpose of illustration or parallelism. At this time he likewise augmented his fund for Scripture interpretation by the acquisition of various Oriental dialects. After quitting Warrington, at the

dissolution of the academy, he took up his residence successively at Bramcote in Nottinghamshire, at Richmond, and at Nottingham, upon the plan of taking a few pupils, and pursuing at his leisure those studies to which he became continually more attached. While in the first of these situations, he published the first volume of *An Inquiry into the Opinions of the Christian Writers of the three first Centuries concerning the Person of Jesus Christ*, a learned and elaborate performance, but which did not meet with encouragement sufficient to induce him to proceed in the design. A painful disorder in his left shoulder, with which he was attacked in 1786, and which harassed him for two years, interrupted the course of his employments; and he could do no more for letters during that period, than alleviate his sufferings by drawing up some remarks upon the Georgics of Virgil and the Poems of Gray, which he published with editions of those delightful compositions. As his health returned, his theological pursuits were resumed, and he again engaged in the field of controversy. He also, in 1789, made a commencement of a work, which promised much, as well for his reputation, as for the advantage of sacred literature. It was *An Union of Theological and Classical Learning, illustrating the Scriptures by Light*

borrowed from the Philology of Greece and Rome. Under the title of *Silva Critica* three parts of this performance have issued from the University press of Cambridge.

The formation of a dissenting college at Hackney, which it was hoped, by the powerful aid of the metropolis, would become both more considerable and more permanent than former institutions of a like kind, produced an invitation to Mr. Wakefield to undertake the classical professorship. With this he thought proper to comply; and accordingly, in 1790, he quitted his abode at Nottingham, and removed to Hackney, upon the plan of joining with public tuition the instruction of private pupils. He has himself informed the public that "both of these anchors failed him, and left his little bark again afloat on the ocean of life." It is neither necessary nor desirable to revive the memory of differences between persons really respectable and well-intentioned, but under the influence of different habits and views of things. We shall confine ourselves to a remark or two.

Mr. Wakefield was a person who derived his opinions entirely from the source of his own reason and reflection, and it will not be easy to name a man who stood more single and insulated in this respect throughout life than he. Although

his principles had induced him to renounce his clerical office in the church of England, and he had become a *dissenter* from her doctrine and worship, yet he was far from uniting with any particular class of those who are usually denominated *dissenters.* He had an insuperable repugnance to their mode of performing divine service; and he held in no high estimation the theological and philosophical knowledge which it has been the principal object of their seminaries of education to communicate. It has already been observed, that the basis of his own divinity was philology. Classical literature, therefore, as containing the true rudiments of all other science, was that on which he thought the greatest stress should be laid, in a system of liberal education. This point he inculcated with an earnestness which probably appeared somewhat dictatorial to the conductors of the institution.

Further, in the progress of his speculations, he had been led to form notions concerning the expediency and propriety of public worship, extremely different from those of every body of Christians, whether in sects or establishments; and as he was incapable of thinking one thing and practising another, he had sufficiently made known his sentiments on this subject, as well in conversation, as by abstaining from attendance

upon every place of religious assembly. They who were well acquainted with him, knew that in his own breast piety was one of the most predominant affections; but the assembling for social worship had for so many ages been regarded as the most powerful instrument for the support of general religion, that to discourage it was considered as of dangerous example, especially in a person engaged in the education of youth. Notwithstanding, therefore, his classical instructions in the college were received by the students almost with enthusiastical admiration, and conferred high credit on the institution, a dissolution of his connection with it took place in the summer of 1791.

The subsequent publication of his pamphlet on Public Worship deprived him (as he says) of the only two private pupils he expected. From that period he continued to reside at Hackney, in the capacity of a retired man of letters, employing his time partly in the education of his own children, partly in the composition of works which will perpetuate his name among those who have cultivated literature with most ardor and success. His *Translation of the New Testament, with Notes*, 3 vols. 8vo, appeared towards the close of 1791, and was very respectably patronized. In language it preserves as much as possible of the old version. Its numerous deviations from that

in sense, will be regarded as happy alterations or bold innovations, according to the prepossessions of the reader. A long list might be given of his succeeding labors, but we shall ouly particularize some of the most considerable. He printed (no longer at the Cambridge press) two more parts of his *Silva Critica.* He gave a new edition, much corrected, of his *Translation of the New Testament;* and, besides, proved his zeal for Christianity, by enlarging a former work *On the Evidences of the Christian Religion,* and by replying to Thomas Paine's attack upon it in his *Age of Reason.*

To the works of Pope, as our most cultivated English poet, and the most perfect example of that splendor and felicity of diction which is not attained without much study of the poetic art, Mr. Wakefield paid particular attention. It was his design to have published a complete edition of his works; but after he had printed the first volume, the scheme was rendered abortive by Dr. Warton's edition. He, however, printed a second volume, entitled *Notes on Pope,* and also gave a new edition of Pope's *Iliad and Odyssey.* In these publications he displayed all that variety of comparison and illustration, that power of tracing a poetical thought through different authors, with its successive shades and

heightenings, and that exquisite feeling of particular beauties, which distinguish him as an annotator of the writers of Greece and Rome.

As a classical editor he appeared in a selection from the Greek tragedians, in editions of Horace, Virgil, Bion and Moschus, and, finally, in his *Lucretius;* a vast performance, which alone might seem the labor of many industrious years. Of his character as a man of letters, I have been favored with the following estimate by an able judge, the Rev. E. Cogan, of Cheshunt:

"In extent of erudition, particularly if an acquaintance with the Oriental languages be taken into the account, he was perhaps inferior to no man of the present age; and they who have been considered as having had the advantage over him in some of the less important *minutiæ* of Greek literature, have probably limited their attention to fewer objects, and certainly commenced their literary course with a more advantageous preparation. In conjectural criticism he exhibits much of the character of Bentley and Markland: men whom he esteemed according to their high deserts in that species of learning to which his own mind was peculiarly directed. Like these illustrious scholars, he is always learned, sometimes bold, and frequently happy. Like them, he had a mind which disdained to be held in a servile

subjection to authority; and in defiance of established readings, which too often substitute the dreams of transcribers for the gems of antiquity, he followed, without fear, wherever reason and probability seemed to lead the way. In his earlier critical works he exhibited, amidst some errors which his riper judgement discarded, the promise of his future greatness: and even his faults were the infirmities of genius; they flowed from that ardor and enthusiasm which cannot always wait for the slow decisions of cool inquiry. They were faults which, though they afforded a small consolation to dull malignity, did not diminish his praise in the estimation of one solid and impartial judge. His favorite study was poetry, and in an extensive acquaintance with the ancient poets, both Greek and Roman, few men since the revival of letters have equalled him, and no one ever surpassed him in the perception of their beauties. When he applies to them the hand of conjecture, he rarely fails to give new spirit and animation by his touch; and where we are obliged to dissent from his corrections, we are sometimes sorry for the credit of the poet that he does not appear to have written what the critic has suggested. He was peculiarly fond of tracing an elegance of poetical expression through the various modifications which it assumed in the hands

of different writers, and in the illustration of ancient phraseology he did not overlook the poets of his own country, with many of which he was very familiar. His great work is undoubtedly his edition of *Lucretius*, a work which ignorance may despise, at which malice may carp, and hireling scribblers may rail, but which will rank with the labors of Heinsius, Gronovius, Burman, and Heyne, as long as literature itself shall live. It will share the prediction with which Ovid has graced the memory of the great poet himself;

> Carmina sublimis tunc sunt peritura Lucreti,
> Exitio terras cum dabit una dies.

Besides its critical merit, it exhibits the richest display of the flowers of poetry that ever was presented to the world, and will amply reward the perusal of every man who has sensibility to relish the finest touches of human genius.

"Mr. Wakefield, even before this immortal specimen of his talents, was deservedly held in the highest estimation by the literati of Germany; and if his honors at home have not equalled his reputation abroad, the candid mind will easily find the explanation of this phenomenon in the violence of political party, and the mean jealousy which has too often disgraced the scholars of Great Britain. The name of Bentley is connected

with proof enough of the justice of this insinuation."

I shall now proceed to an incident of his life which will be viewed with regret by the ingenuous of all parties: the *additional* sensations it inspires will, of course, be different according to the particular sentiments of individuals. It has already been hinted that Mr. Wakefield, from the time of his residence at Liverpool, had begun to imbibe a detestation of that policy which trampled upon the rights of mankind, and was founded upon unfeeling avarice and unprincipled ambition. His study of Christianity more and more convinced him that the maxims of the world and those of religion were in direct opposition: and, in common with many other excellent and learned men, he became persuaded of the absolute incompatibility of war with the christian character. He had moreover received those principles of the origin and end of government, which, however they may now be regarded, were once thought fundamental to the British constitution, and the basis of all civil liberty. He had occasionally, in the political contests of his country, publicly expressed his opinions upon these subjects; but the French revolution was an event calculated to call forth all his ardor in the cause. His sanguine temper led him to consider it as the undoubted commencement of

a better order of things, in which rational liberty, equitable policy, and pure religion, would finally become triumphant. He watched its progress with incredible interest, excused its unhappy deviations, and abhorred the combination of arbitrary power which threatened its destruction. It was impossible that he should refrain from employing his pen on the occasion, or that he should do it with a "cold and unperforming hand." In his *Remarks on the General Orders of the Duke of York*, he had arraigned the justice of the war with France in terms which are supposed to have exercised the utmost forbearance of the Ministry. But in his "Reply to some Parts of the Bishop of Landaff's Address," he passed those limits. From that systematic progress in restraining the free communication of political opinions which may be traced in the acts of the late Ministry, it is not unreasonable to conclude, that a victim to the liberty of the press, of name and character sufficient to inspire a wide alarm, was really desired. Yet, as the attorney-general solemnly protested that his prosecution of this pamphlet was spontaneous, and solely dictated to him by the heinous and dangerous nature of its contents, it would be uncandid to call his assertion in question. A man of sense, however, may be allowed to smile at the notion of real danger to

supreme power, supported as well by public opinion, as by every active energy of the state, from a private writer, arguing upon principles so little applicable to the practice of the world, as those of the Gospel. Further, a man of a truly liberal and generous mind will perhaps view, not without indignation, the thunders of the law hurled upon a head distinguished for virtue and learning, without any humane allowance for well intentioned, if misguided, zeal. The attack commenced, not against the principal, who boldly and honestly came forward to avow himself, but against the agents; and the grand purport of it was sufficiently declared by the superior severity with which a bookseller was treated, who was not the editor, but only a casual vender of the work; but who had long been obnoxious as a distinguished publisher of books of free inquiry. Mr. Wakefield himself next underwent prosecution; and his sentence, upon conviction, was a two years' imprisonment in Dorchester gaol. There exists no other *measure* of punishment in such a case than comparison, and perhaps, upon the application of this rule, it will not be found inordinately severe. Two years' abode in a prison is, however, a most serious infliction! it is cutting off so much from desirable existence. Mr. Wakefield, notwithstanding his natural fortitude, felt it as such. Though, from his habits of sobriety and seclusion, he had

little to resign in respect of the ordinary pleasures of the world; his habits of pedestrian exercise, and his enjoyment of family comfort, were essentially infringed by confinement. He likewise found all his plans of study so deranged, by the want of his library, and the many incommodities of his situation, that he was less able to employ that resource against tedium and melancholy than might have been expected. One powerful consolation, however, in addition to that of a good conscience, attended him. A set of warm and generous friends employed themselves in raising a contribution which should not only indemnify him from any pecuniary loss consequent upon his prosecution, but should alleviate his cares for the future support of his family. The purpose was effected; and it is to be hoped that Englishmen will ever retain spirit enough to take under their protection men who have faithfully, though perhaps not with due prudence and consideration, maintained the noble cause of mankind against the frowns of authority.

At length the tedious period elapsed, and the last day of May, 1801, restored him to liberty. He was received by his friends, many of whom had visited him in prison, with the most cordial welcome. He was endeared to them by his sufferings, and his character was generally thought to have received a meliorating tinge of mildness and moderation from the reflections which had

passed through his mind. He formed extensive plans for future literary labors, and he seemed fully capable of enjoying and benefiting that world to which he was returned. When—Oh, what is man!—a fever, probably occasioned by his anxious exertions to fix himself in a new habitation, cut short all his prospects. From the first attack he persuaded himself that the termination would be fatal, and this conviction materially opposed every attempt of medicine in his favor. He surveyed death without terror, and prepared for it by tender offices to the survivors. The event took place on September the 9th.

It is presumed that the character of Mr. Wakefield is sufficiently developed in the preceding sketch of his life. It may however be added, that there was in him an openness, a simplicity, a good faith, an affectionate ardor, a noble elevation of soul, which irresistibly made way to the hearts of all who nearly approached him, and rendered him the object of friendly attachment, to a degree almost unexampled. Let this be placed in balance against all that might appear arrogant or self-sufficient, harsh or irritable, in his literary conduct! His talents were rare—his morals pure—his views exalted—his courage invincible—his integrity without a spot. When will the place of such a man be supplied!

(F) p. 246.

MEMOIR

OF

JOSEPH PRIESTLEY, LL.D. F.R.S.

JOSEPH PRIESTLEY, LL.D. F.R.S. and member of many foreign literary societies, was born on March 13, old style, 1733, at Field-head, in the parish of Birstall, in the West-riding of Yorkshire. His father was engaged in the clothing manufacture, and both parents were persons of respectability among the Calvinistic Dissenters. Joseph was from an early period brought up in the house of Mr. Joseph Keighley, who had married his aunt. A fondness for reading was one of the first passions he displayed; and it probably induced his friends to change their intentions of educating him for trade, and destine him for a learned profession. He was sent to a school at Batley, the master of which possessed no common share of erudition. Besides the Latin and Greek languages, he was capable of giving instructions

in the Hebrew; and his pupil carried with him the knowledge of all the three to the academy of Daventry; at which he was entered, in his 19th year, as a student of divinity. This academy was the successor of that kept by Dr. Dodridge at Northampton, and was conducted by Dr. Ashworth, whose first pupil Mr. Priestley is said to have been. When about the age of twenty-two, he was chosen as an assistant-minister to the Independent congregation of Needham-market in Suffolk. He had at this time begun to imbibe theological opinions different from those of the school in which he had been educated. He had likewise become a student and admirer of the metaphysical philosophy of Hartley, of which, during life, he was the zealous advocate and the acute elucidator.

After an abode of three years at Needham, he accepted an invitation to be pastor of a small flock at Namptwich in Cheshire. There he opened a day-school, in the conduct of which he exhibited that turn for ingenious research, and that spirit of improvement, which were to be his distinguishing characteristics. He enlarged the minds of his pupils by philosophical experiments, and he drew up an English Grammar upon an improved plan, which was his earliest publication. His reputation as a man of uncommon talents and active in-

quiry soon extended itself among his professional brethren; and when, upon the death of the Rev. Dr. Taylor, the tutor in divinity at Warrington academy, Dr. Aikin was chosen to supply his place, Mr. Priestley was invited to undertake the vacant department of belles-lettres. It was in 1761 that he removed to a situation happily accommodated to his personal improvement, by the free society of men of large intellectual attainments, and to the display of his own various powers of mind. He soon after made a matrimonial connection with Mary, daughter to Mr. Wilkinson of Bersham Foundry, near Wrexham; a lady of an excellent heart, and a strong understanding, and his faithful partner in all the vicissitudes of his life.

At Warrington properly commenced the literary career of this eminent person, and a variety of publications soon announced to the world the extent and originality of his pursuits. One of the first was a Chart of Biography, in which he ingeniously contrived to present an ocular image both of the proportional duration of existence, and of the chronological period and synchronism of all the most eminent persons of all ages and countries, in the great departments of science, art, and public life. This was very favorably received, and suggested a second chart, of History, in like manner offering to the view the extent, time, and

duration of states and empires. Subjects of history and general politics at this time engaged much of his attention. He delivered lectures upon them, of which the substance was given to the world in various useful publications. His notions of government were founded on those principles of the original and indefeasible rights of man, which are the sole basis of all political freedom. He was an ardent admirer of the British Constitution, according to his conceptions of it, and ably illustrated it in his lectures.

With respect to his proper academical department of the belles-lettres, he displayed the enlargement of his views in a set of Lectures on the Theory and History of Language, and on the Principles of Oratory and Criticism; in the latter of which, he successfully applied the Hartleian theory of association, to objects of taste. Although his graver pursuits did not allow him to cultivate the agreeable parts of literature as a practitioner, he sufficiently showed, by some light and playful efforts, that he would have been capable of excelling in this walk, had he given his attention to it. But he was too intent upon *things* to expend his regards upon *words*, and he remained contented with a style of writing accommodated to the great business of instruction, of which the characteristics were accuracy and perspicuity.

Fully as his time might seem occupied by the

academical and literary employments above enumerated, he found means, by perpetual activity and indefatigable industry, to accomplish the first great work in natural philosophy, which laid a solid foundation for his fame in that department of human knowledge. Having long amused himself with an electrical machine, and taken an interest in the progress of discovery in that branch of physics, he was induced to undertake a History of Electricity, with an account of its present state. As the science was of late date, and all its facts and theories lay within a moderate compass of reading, he thought it a task not beyond his powers to effect completely what he proposed; although his plan included an extensive course of experiment of his own, to verify what had been done by others, and to clear up remaining doubts and obscurities. It appears from his preface, that, while engaged in this design, he had enjoyed the advantage of personal intercourse with some eminent philosophers, among whom he acknowledges as coadjutors, Drs. Watson and Franklin, and Mr. Canton. The work first appeared at Warrington, in 1767, 4to; and so well was it received, that it passed into a fifth edition, in 4to, in 1794. It is indeed an admirable model of scientific history: full without superfluity; clear, methodical, candid and unaffected. Its original experiments are highly ingenious, and gave a foretaste of that fer-

tility of contrivance and sagacity of observation which afterwards so much distinguished the author.

It may be proper in this place to speak of Dr. Priestley's general character as an experimental philosopher. No person in this class can be met with who engaged in his inquiries with a more pure and simple love of truth, detached from all private and selfish considerations of fame or advantage. Hence he was solicitous only that discoveries should be made, regardless by whom they were made; and he was placed far beyond all that petty jealousy and rivalry which has so often led to the suppression of hints from casual observations, till the proprietor should have made the most of them for himself. On the contrary, he was impatient till all engaged in similar pursuits should be put upon the track which appeared to him most likely to lead to successful investigation. Having no favorite theories to support, he admitted indifferently facts of all apparent tendencies; and felt not the least hesitation in renouncing an opinion hastily formed, for another, the result of maturer examination. He regarded the whole field of knowledge as common ground, to be cultivated by the united labour of individuals for the general benefit. In these respects he seems most to have resembled the excellent

Stephen Hales, whom Haller justly entitles "*vir indefessus, ad inveniendum verum natus.*"

His connection with the Warrington academy ceased in 1768, when he accepted an invitation to officiate as pastor to a large and respectable congregation of protestant dissenters at Leeds. Considering himself now as more especially devoted to theology, he suffered that, which had always been his favorite object, to take the lead amid his intellectual pursuits, though not to the exclusion of others.

From infancy his mind had been strongly impressed with devotional sentiments; and although he had widely deviated from the doctrinal opinions which he had first imbibed, yet all the pious ardor and religious zeal of the sect among whom he was educated remained undiminished. He likewise retained in full force the principles of a dissenter from the Establishment, and those ideas of congregational discipline which had become obsolete among many of the richer and more relaxed of the separatists. Numerous publications relative to these points soon marked his new residence. His "Institutes of Natural and Revealed Religion" gave, in a popular and concise form, his system of divinity with its evidences. His "View of the Principles and Conduct of the Protestant Dissenters" exhibited his notions of the

grounds of dissent and the proper character and policy of a religious sect; and a variety of controversial and polemic writings presented to the world his views of the Christian dispensation.

As a divine, if possible, still more than as a philosopher, *truth* was his sole aim, which he pursued with a more exalted ardor, in proportion to the greater importance of the subject. Naturally sanguine, and embracing the conclusions of his reason with a plenitude of conviction that excluded every particle of doubt, he inculcated his tenets with an earnestness limited by nothing but a sacred regard to the rights of private judgement in others as well as himself. The considerations of human prudence were nothing in his eye, nor did he admit the policy of introducing novelties of opinion by slow degrees, and endeavouring to conciliate a favorable hearing, by softening or suppressing what was most likely to shock prejudiced minds. He boldly and plainly uttered what he conceived to be the truth and the whole truth, secure, that by its own native strength it would in fine prevail, and thinking himself little responsible for any temporary evils that might be incurred during the interval. To adopt the beautiful and happy simile of one of his late vindicators, "he followed truth as a man who hawks, follows his sport; at full speed, straight forward,

looking only upward, and regardless into what difficulties the chace may lead him."

As pure religion was the great end of Dr. Priestley's labors, so perfect freedom of discussion was the means; and since he was convinced that this could not be attained under the domination of powerful and jealous establishments, interested in maintaining the particular system on which they were founded, he was a warm and open enemy to all unions of ecclesiastical with political systems, however modified and limited. In this respect, as in various others, he differed from many of his dissenting brethren; and, while he was engaged in controversy with the Church, he had to sustain attacks from the opposite quarter. But warfare of this kind he never feared or avoided: it cost him little expense of time, and none of spirits; it even seemed as if such an exercise was salutary to his mental constitution.

Few readers of this sketch need be told that Dr. Priestley was at the head of the modern Unitarians; a sect, of which the leading tenet is the proper humanity of Christ, and which confines every species of religious worship and adoration to the One Supreme. If those who have charged him with infidelity meant any thing more than an inference from his avowed opinions on this head, and imagined that he intended more than he de-

clared, and entertained a secret purpose of undermining the Christian Revelation, they have been guilty of a calumny from which the least exertion of candor and penetration would have preserved them. They might have perceived that he was one who laid open his whole soul on every subject in which he was engaged; and that zeal for Christianity, as a divine dispensation and the most valuable of all gifts bestowed upon the human kind, was his ruling passion.

The favorable reception of the *History of Electricity* had induced Dr. Priestley to adopt the grand design, of pursuing the rise and progress of the other sciences, in a historical form; and much of his time at Leeds was occupied in his second work upon this plan, entitled *The History and present State of Discoveries relating to Vision, Light, and Colours*, which appeared in 2 vols. 4to. 1772. This is allowed to be a performance of great merit; possessing a lucid arrangement, and that clear, perspicuous view of his subject which it was the author's peculiar talent to afford. It failed, however, of attaining the popularity of his *History of Electricity*, chiefly because it was impossible to give adequate notions of many parts of the theory of optics without a more accurate acquaintance with mathematics than common readers can be supposed to possess. Perhaps, too, the

writer himself was scarcely competent to explain the abstruser parts of this science. It proved to be the termination of his plan: but science was no loser by the circumstance; for the activity of his mind was turned from the consideration of the discoveries of others, to the attempt of making discoveries of his own, and nothing could be more brilliant than his success. We find that at this period he had begun those experiments upon air, which have given the greatest celebrity to his name as a natural philosopher.

In 1770, Dr. Priestley quitted Leeds for a situation as different as could well be imagined. His philosophical writings, and the recommendation of his friend Dr. Price, had made him so favorably known to the Earl of Shelburne (afterwards Marquis of Lansdown) that this nobleman, one of the very few in this country who have assumed the patronage of literature and science, made him such advantageous proposals for residence with him, that regard to his family would not permit them to be rejected. It was merely in the capacity of his lordship's librarian, or, rather, his literary and philosophical companion, in the hours that could be devoted to such pursuits, that Dr. Priestley became an inmate with him. The domestic tuition of Lord Shelburne's sons was already committed to a man of merit, and they received

from Dr. Priestley no other instruction than that of some courses of experimental philosophy. During this period, his family resided at Calne, in Wiltshire, adjacent to Bow-wood, the country seat of Lord Shelburne. Dr. Priestley frequently accompanied his noble patron to London, and mixed at his house with several of the eminent characters of the time, by whom he was treated with the respect due to his talents and virtues. He also attended his lordship in a visit to Paris, where he saw many of the most celebrated men of science and letters in that country; and he astonished them by his assertion of a firm belief in revealed religion, which had been presented to their minds in such colors, that they thought no man of sense could hesitate in rejecting it as an idle fable.

Whilst he was enjoying the advantages of this situation, in every assistance from books and a noble apparatus for the pursuit of experimental inquiry, he also appeared in the height of his fame as an acute metaphysician. In 1775, he published his *Examination of Dr. Reid on the Human Mind; Dr. Beattie on the Nature and Immutability of Truth; and Dr. Oswald's Appeal to Common Sense.* The purpose of this volume was to refute the new doctrine of *common sense*, employed as the criterion of truth by the metaphy-

sicians of Scotland, and to prepare the way for the reception of the Hartleian theory of the human mind, which he was then engaged in presenting under a more popular and intelligible form. They who conceive Dr. Priestley to have been triumphant in argument on this occasion, agree in disapproving (as he himself did afterwards) the contempt and sarcasm with which he treated his antagonists, which they do not think excused by the air of arrogance and self-sufficiency assumed by these writers in their strictures upon other reasoners. But this was not the only instance in which he thought it allowable to enliven the dryness of controversy by strokes of ridicule. He never intentionally misrepresented either the arguments or the purposes of an opponent; but he measured the respect with which he treated him, by that which he felt for him in his own mind.

In his publication of Hartley's Theory he had expressed some doubts as to the common hypothesis, that man possesses a soul, or immaterial substance, totally distinct from his body. For this opinion he had undergone obloquy as a favorer of atheism; but as no personal imputation was of weight with him in the pursuit of what he thought to be the truth, he did not scruple, in 1777, to publish *Disquisitions relating to Matter and Spirit*, in which he gave a history of the phi-

losophical doctrine concerning the soul, and openly supported the *material* system, which makes it homogeneous with the body. Perhaps, of all Dr. Priestley's deviations from received opinions, this has subjected him to the greatest odium, and has most startled the true friends of reason and free inquiry, on account of its supposed consequences. The natural proofs of a future state appear to be so much invalidated by the rejection of a separate principle, the seat of thought, which may escape from the perishing body to which it is temporarily united, that he seemed to have been employed in demolishing one of the great pillars upon which religion is founded. It is enough here to observe, that, in Dr. Priestley's mind, the deficiency of these natural proofs only operated as an additional argument in favor of revelation; the necessity of which, to support the most important point of human belief, was thereby rendered more strikingly apparent. It may be added, that as he materialized spirit, so he, in some measure, spiritualized matter, by assigning to it penetrability and other subtle qualities.

At this time he also appeared in great force as the champion of the doctrine of philosophical necessity; a doctrine not less obnoxious to many, on account of its supposed effects on morality, than

the former. To him, however, it was the source (as he always asserted) of the highest satisfaction, both religious and moral; and a number of his followers have found it, in like manner, compatible with all the best principles of human conduct. With his intimate friend, Dr. Price, whose opinions in both the last-mentioned points were radically different from his, a correspondence relative to them took place, which was published in a volume, and affords a most pleasing example of debate, carried on with perfect urbanity, and every token of mutual respect and affection.

Such was the wonderful compass and versatility of his mind, that at this very period he was carrying on that course of discovery concerning aëriform bodies, which has rendered his name so illustrious among philosophical chemists. In the *Philosophical Transactions* for 1773, we find a paper containing "Observations on different Kinds of Air," by Dr. Priestley; which obtained the honorary prize of Copley's medal. These were reprinted, with many important additions, in the first volume of his *Experiments and Observations on different Kinds of Air*, 8vo. 1774. A second volume of this work was published in 1775, and a third in 1777. To give the slightest view of the original matter in these volumes, would occupy more time and space than this sketch per-

mits; but it may with justice be affirmed, that they added a greater mass of fact to the history of aëriform fluids than the united labours of all others employed upon the same subject. Some of the most striking of his discoveries were those of nitrous, and dephlogisticated, or pure, air; of the restoration of vitiated air by vegetation; of the influence of light on vegetables, and of the effects of respiration upon the blood. In these volumes he did not attempt theory or systematic arrangement, thinking that the knowledge of facts was not sufficiently advanced for that purpose; and he threw them out hastily as new matter occurred, in pursuance of his liberal principle already noticed, that fellow-labourers in matters of science should as soon as possible be apprized of discoveries which might put them in the track of making others.

The name of Priestley was by these publications spread through all the enlightened countries of Europe, and honors from scientific bodies in various parts were accumulated upon him. The votaries of physical science now, doubtless, flattered themselves, that the ardor of his powerful mind was durably fixed upon the advancement of natural philosophy and chemistry; but an intimation at the close of the last volume, of his inten-

tion to intermit those pursuits in order to engage in other speculative topics, sufficiently proved to all who knew him, that experimental inquiries could occupy only a secondary place in his mind. These other and more favorite topics, were the metaphysical theories which have been already mentioned, and the theological discussions which he resumed with fresh zeal and industry. The continuation of his *Institutes of Religion;* his *Letters to a Philosophical Unbeliever;* his *Harmony of the Evangelists;* and various tracts on moral and religious topics, marked his return to his former studies.

The term of his engagement with Lord Shelburne having expired, Dr. Priestley, with a pension for life of 150*l.* per annum, was at liberty to choose a new situation.

He gave the preference to the neighbourhood of the populous town of Birmingham, chiefly induced by the advantages it afforded, from the nature of its manufactures, to the pursuit of chemical experiments. It was also the residence of several men of science; among whom the names of Watt, Withering, Bolton, and Keir, are well known to the public. With these he was soon upon terms of friendly reciprocation of knowledge and mutual aid in research; and their *Lunarian*

Club presented a constellation of talent which would not easily have been assembled even in the metropolis.

He had not long occupied his new habitation, before he was invited to undertake the office of pastor to a congregation of Dissenters in Birmingham, upon which he entered with great satisfaction towards the close of 1780. He found a society cordially attached to his person and doctrines; and he merited their esteem by the most assiduous performance of all the pastoral duties. Some of the most important of his theological works soon issued from the Birmingham press. Of these were his *Letters to Bishop Newcome, on the Duration of Christ's Ministry;* and his *History of the Corruptions of Christianity;* afterwards followed by his *History of Early Opinions.* Controversies upon theological topics multiplied around him, to all of which he paid the attention they seemed to require. The warm disputes which took place on occasion of the applications of the Dissenters for relief from the disabilities and penalties of the Corporation and Test Acts, supplied a new subject of contest into which he could not forbear to enter, both as a friend to toleration in general, and as one of the body aggrieved. His hostility to the Establishment became more decided, and he *appealed to the people* on the

points of difference, in his *Familiar Letters to the Inhabitants of Birmingham*, written with much force, but with his usual disregard of caution.

Little has hitherto been said of the political exertions of Dr. Priestley, which, indeed, form no conspicuous part of his literary life. He had displayed his attachment to freedom by his *Essay on the first Principles of Government*, and by an anonymous pamphlet on the state of public liberty in this country; and had shown a warm interest in the cause of America at the time of its unfortunate rupture with the mother-country. The French revolution was an event which could scarcely fail of being contemplated by him with satisfaction. His sanguine hopes saw in it the dawn of light and liberty over Europe; and he particularly expected from it the eventual downfal of all establishments inimical to the spread of truth. Such expectations he was at no pains to conceal; and as parties now began to take their decided stations, and to be inspired with all the usual rancor of opponents in civil contests, he was naturally rendered a prominent mark of party hatred.

In this state of mutual exasperation, the celebration of the anniversary of the destruction of the Bastille, by a public dinner, on July 14, 1791, at which Dr. Priestley *was not present*, gave the

signal of those savage riots, which have thrown lasting disgrace on the town of Birmingham, and in some degree on the national character. Amid the conflagration of houses of worship and private dwellings, Dr. Priestley was the great object of popular rage; his house, library, manuscripts, and apparatus, were made a prey to the flames; he was hunted like a proclaimed criminal, and experienced not only the furious outrages of a mob, but the most unhandsome treatment from some who ought to have sustained the parts of gentlemen, and friends of peace and order.

It would be painful to dwell upon these scenes. Suffice it to say, that he was driven for ever from his favorite residence; that his losses were very inadequately compensated; and that he passed some time as a wanderer, till an invitation to succeed Dr. Price in a congregation at Hackney gave him a new settlement. This was rendered more interesting to him by a connection with the new dissenting-college established at that place. His mind, by its native elasticity, recovered from the shock of his cruel losses, and he resumed his usual labors.

This was, however, far from being a season of tranquillity. Parties ran high, and events were daily taking place calculated to agitate the mind, and inspire varied emotions of tumultuous expec-

tation. Dr. Priestley, however he might be regarded by the friends of government, had no reason to entertain apprehensions for his personal safety on the part of authority; but he was conscious that he lay under a load of public odium and suspicion, and he was perpetually harassed by the petty malignity of bigotry. Having so lately been the victim of a paroxysm of popular rage, he could not be perfectly easy in the vicinity of a vast metropolis, where any sudden impulse given to the tumultuous mass might bring irresistible destruction upon the heads of those who should be pointed out as objects of vengeance. It is not, therefore, to be wondered at, that he looked towards an asylum in a country to which he had always shown a friendly attachment, and which was in possession of all the blessings of civil and religious liberty. Some family reasons also enforced this choice of a new situation. He took leave of his native country in 1794, and embarked for North America. He carried with him the sincere regrets of a great number of venerating and affectionate friends and admirers; and his departure, while celebrated as a triumph by unfeeling bigots, was lamented by the moderate and impartial, as a kind of stigma on the country which, by its ill treatment, had expelled a citizen whom it might enrol among its proudest boasts.

Northumberland, a town in the inland parts of the state of Pennsylvania, was the place in which he fixed his residence. It was selected on account of the purchase of landed property in its neighbourhood; otherwise, its remoteness from the sea-ports, its want of many of the comforts of civilized life, and of all the helps to studious and scientific pursuit, rendered it a peculiarly undesirable abode for one of Dr. Priestley's habits and employments. The loss of his excellent wife, and of a very promising son, together with repeated attacks of disease and other calamities, severely tried the fortitude and resignation of this christian philosopher; but he had within him what rendered him superior to all external events, and pious serenity was the settled temper of his soul.

In America he was received, if not with the ardor of sympathy and admiration, yet with general respect; nor were the angry contests of party able lastingly to deprive him of the esteem due to his character. If he had any sanguine hopes of diffusing his religious principles over the new continent; or if his friends expected that the brilliancy of his philosophical reputation should place him in a highly conspicuous light among a people yet in the infancy of mental culture, such expectations were certainly disappointed. He was, however, heard as a preacher by some of the most

distinguished members of Congress; and he was offered, but declined, the place of chemical professor at Philadelphia. It became his great object to enable himself in his retirement at Northumberland to renew that course of philosophical experiment, and especially that train of theological writing, which had occupied so many of the best years of his life. By indefatigable pains he got together a valuable apparatus and well-furnished library, and cheerfully returned to his former employments. By many new experiments on the constitution of airs, he became more and more fixed in his belief of the phlogistic theory, and in his opposition to the new French chemical system, of which he lived to be the sole opponent of note. The results of several of his inquiries on these topics were given, both in separate publications, and in the *American Philosophical Transactions.* A number of pamphlets on different occasions of controversy fell from his pen; and by his comparisons of the Jewish with the Mahometan and Hindoo religions, and of the characters of Christ and Socrates, he endeavored to strengthen the bulwarks of revelation. The liberal contributions of his friends in England enabled him to commence the printing of two extensive works, on which he was zealously bent, a *Church History*, and an *Exposition of the Scriptures*; and

through the progress of his final decline he unremittingly urged their completion.

The circumstances attending the close of his useful and exemplary life are related with such interesting simplicity in the following article of the *Philadelphia Gazette*, that every one must receive pleasure from reading the narrative entire.

"Since his illness at Philadelphia, in the year 1801, he never regained his former good state of health. His complaint was constant indigestion, and a difficulty of swallowing food of any kind. But during this period of general debility, he was busily employed in printing his *Church History*, and the first volume of his *Notes on the Scriptures*, and in making new and original experiments. During this period, likewise, he wrote his pamphlet of *Jesus and Socrates compared*, and reprinted his *Essay on Phlogiston*.

"From about the beginning of November 1803 to the middle of January 1804, his complaint grew more serious; yet, by judicious medical treatment, and strict attention to diet, he, after some time, seemed, if not gaining strength, at least not getting worse; and his friends fondly hoped that his health would continue to improve as the season advanced. He, however, considered his life as very precarious. Even at this time, besides his miscellaneous reading, which was at all times

very extensive, he read through all the works quoted in his *Comparison of the different Systems of Grecian Philosophers with Christianity*; composed that work, and transcribed the whole of it in less than three months; so that he has left it ready for the press. During this period he composed, in one day, his *Second Reply* to Dr. Linn.

"In the last fortnight of January, his fits of indigestion became more alarming, his legs swelled, and his weakness increased. Within two days of his death he became so weak, that he could walk but a little way, and that with great difficulty. For some time he found himself unable to speak; but, on recovering a little, he told his friends, that he had never felt more pleasantly during his whole life-time, than during the time he was unable to speak. He was fully sensible that he had not long to live, yet talked with cheerfulness to all who called on him. In the course of the day he expressed his thankfulness at being permitted to die quietly in his family, without pain, and with every convenience and comfort that he could wish for. He dwelt upon the peculiarly happy situation in which it had pleased the Divine Being to place him in life, and the great advantage he had enjoyed in the acquaintance and friendship of some of the best and wisest men of the age in which he lived, and the satisfaction he derived

from having led an useful as well as happy life. He this day gave directions about printing the remainder of his *Notes on Scripture* (a work, in the completion of which he was much interested), and looked over the first sheet of the third volume, after it was corrected by those who were to attend to its completion, and expressed his satisfaction at the manner of its being executed.

"On Sunday, the 5th, he was much weaker, but sat up in an arm-chair for a few minutes. He desired that John, chap. xi., might be read to him: he stopped the reader at the 45th verse, dwelt for some time on the advantage he had derived from reading the Scriptures daily, and recommended this practice, saying, that it would prove a source of the purest pleasure. 'We shall all (said he) meet finally, we only require different degrees of discipline suited to our different tempers, to prepare us for final happiness.' Mr. —— coming into his room, he said, 'You see, Sir, I am still living.' Mr. —— observed, 'that he would always live.' 'Yes, I *believe* I *shall;* we shall meet again in another and a better world.' He said this with great animation, laying hold of Mr. ——'s hand in both his own. After evening prayers, when his grand-children were brought to his bed-side, he spoke to them separately, and exhorted them to continue to love each other, &c. 'I am going

(added he) to sleep as well as you, for death is only a good long sound sleep in the grave, and we shall meet again.'

"On Monday morning, the 9th of February, on being asked how he did, he answered in a faint voice, that he had no pain, but appeared fainting away gradually. About eight o'clock, he desired to have three pamphlets which had been looked out by his directions the evening before. He then dictated as clearly and distinctly as he had ever done in his life, the additions and alterations which he wished to have made in each. M—— took down the substance of what he said, which was read to him. He observed, 'Sir, you have put in your own language, I wish it to be *mine*.' He then repeated over again, nearly word for word, what he had before said, and when it was transcribed, and read over to him, he said, 'That is right, I have now done.'

"About half an hour after, he desired that he might be removed to a cot. About ten minutes after he was removed to it, he died; but breathed his last so easily, that those who were sitting close to him did not immediately perceive it. He had put his hand to his face, which prevented them from observing it."

This was indeed "the death of the righteous!" and it is presumed, that no one possessed of gene-

rous and tender feelings, how much soever differing in opinion from the deceased, will refrain from embalming his memory with a tear, and crying "Peace be with him!"

In Dr. Priestley's mental constitution were united ardor and vivacity of intellect, with placidity and mildness of temper. With a zeal for the propagation of truth, that would have carried him through fire and water, he joined a calm patience, an unruffled serenity, which rendered him proof against all obstructions and disappointments. It has been suggested, that a man so much in earnest, and so vigorous in controversial warfare, could not fail of being a persecutor, should his party gain the superiority: but this was an erroneous supposition. Not only were the rights of private judgement rendered sacred to him by every principle of his understanding, but his heart would not have suffered him to have injured his bitterest enemy. He was naturally disposed to cheerfulness, and when his mind was not occupied with serious thoughts, could unbend, with even playful ease and negligence, in the private circle of friends. In large and mixed companies he usually spoke little. In the domestic relations of life he was uniformly kind and affectionate. His parental feelings (alas! how keenly were

they excited!) were those of the tenderest and best of fathers. Not malice itself could ever fix a stain on his private conduct, or impeach his integrity.

Such was the man who adds one more imperishable name to the illustrious dead of his country.

(G) p. 247.

MEMOIR

OF

DR. CURRIE.

JAMES CURRIE, M.D., was born at Kirkpatrick-Fleming in Dumfriesshire, on May 31st, 1756. His father was the established minister of that parish, whence he afterwards removed to that of Middlebie. Dr. Currie was an only son: of six sisters, two alone are now surviving. He received the rudiments of learning at the parish-school of his native place, whence he was transferred to the grammar-school of Dumfries, one of the most reputable seminaries of the kind in Scotland. His original destination was for a commercial life, and he passed some years of his youth in Virginia in a mercantile station. Disliking this profession, and unwilling to be a witness of the impending troubles in the American colonies, he quitted that country in 1776, and in the following year commenced a course of medi-

cal study at the university of Edinburgh, which occupied him almost without interruption for three years. A prospect of an appointment in the medical staff of the army, which would not admit of the usual delay of an Edinburgh graduation, induced him to take the degree of Doctor of Physic at Glasgow. He arrived, however, in London too late for the expected post; but still determining to go abroad, he had taken his passage in a ship for Jamaica, when a severe indisposition prevented his sailing, and entirely changed his lot in life. He renounced his first intention; and, after some consideration respecting an eligible settlement, he fixed upon the commercial and rapidly increasing town of Liverpool, which became his residence from the year 1781.

The liberal and enlightened character which has long distinguished many of the leading inhabitants of that place, rendered it a peculiarly favorable theatre for the display of the moral and intellectual endowments for which Dr. Currie was conspicuous, and he soon rose into general esteem. Indeed, it was not possible, even upon a casual acquaintance, for a judge of mankind to fail of being struck by his manly urbanity of behavior, by the elegance and variety of his conversation, by the solid sense and sagacity of his remarks, and by the tokens of a feeling heart, which

graced and dignified the qualities of his understanding. No man was ever more highly regarded by his friends; no physician ever inspired more confidence and attachment in his patients.

In 1783, Dr. Currie made a very desirable matrimonial connection with Lucy, the daughter of William Wallace, Esq., an Irish merchant in Liverpool. Of this marriage a numerous and amiable family was the fruit, by which his name promises to be worthily perpetuated. His professional employment rapidly increased; he was elected one of the physicians of the Infirmary, and took his station among the distinguished characters of the place of his residence.

His first appearance from the press was on occasion of the lamented death of his intimate friend Dr. Bell, a young physician of great hopes settled at Manchester. His elegant and interesting tribute to the memory of this person was published, in 1785, in the first volume of the *Transactions of the Manchester Philosophical and Literary Society*, of which they were both members. He was elected a member of the London Medical Society in 1790, and communicated to it a paper "On Tetanus and Convulsive Disorders," published in the third volume of its *Memoirs*. In 1792, he became a fellow of the Royal Society.

A very curious and instructive "Account of the remarkable Effects of a Shipwreck," communicated by him to that body, was published in the *Philosophical Transactions* of that year.

The mind of Dr. Currie was not made to be confined to a narrow range of speculation, and nothing interesting to human society was indifferent to, or unconsidered by him. The war with France consequent to its great revolutionary struggle, was regarded by him, as it was by many other philanthropists, with disapprobation, with respect as well to its principles, as to its probable effect on the happiness of both countries. A pamphlet which appeared in 1793, under the title of *A Letter Commercial and Political addressed to the Right Hon. William Pitt, by Jasper Wilson, Esq.* was generally understood to proceed from his pen. The energy of language, the weight of argument, and the extent of information displayed in it, drew upon it a large share of notice. It soon attained a second edition, and various answers attested the degree of importance attached to it in the public estimation. One of the respondents took the unwarrantable liberty of directly addressing Dr. Currie, in print, as the author, at the same time affecting on very slender grounds the familiarity of an intimate acquaintance. It can scarcely be doubted that this infringement of the rules of li-

beral controversy was prompted by the malignant purpose of exposing Dr. Currie to popular odium, and injuring him in his profession. He understood it thus, but the particular line of his principal connections, together with the solid basis of the character he had established, enabled him to despise the efforts of party malice.

The greater distinction a professional man acquires from pursuits not belonging to his profession, the more necessary it becomes for him to bring himself into notice as a successful votary of the art or science to which his primary attention is due. Of this point Dr. Currie was very far from being neglectful. To those who employed him he was abundantly known as a skilful and sedulous practitioner, and the medical papers he had already published gave him reputation among his brethren. This reputation was widely extended and raised to an eminent degree by a publication which first appeared in October 1797, intitled *Medical Reports on the Effects of Water cold and warm as a Remedy in Febrile Diseases; with Observations on the Nature of Fever, and on the Effects of Opium, Alcohol, and Inanition.* The practice of affusion of cold water in fevers, which is the leading topic in this work, was suggested to the author by Dr. Wright's narrative in the *London Medical Journal* of his successful treat-

ment of a fever in a homeward-bound ship from Jamaica. Dr. Currie copied and greatly extended it, and investigated the principles by which its use should be directed and regulated. He discovered that the safety and advantage of the application of cold was proportionate to the existing augmentation of the animal heat, and he found the thermometer a very valuable instrument to direct the practitioner's judgement in febrile cases. He may therefore be considered as the principal author of a practice which has already been attended with extraordinary success in numerous instances, and bids fair to prove one of the greatest medical improvements in modern times. The work, which contained many ingenious speculations and valuable observations, was very generally read and admired. A new volume was added to it in 1804, consisting of much interesting matter on different topics, especially in confirmation of the doctrine and practice of the former volume respecting cold affusion. The free and successful employment of this remedy in the scarlatina was one of its most important articles. The author had the satisfaction of receiving numerous acknowledgements of the benefit derived from his instructions both in private and in naval and military practice. He himself was so much convinced of the utility of the methods he recommend-

ed, that a revision of the whole work for a new edition was one of the latest labors of his life.

Dr. Currie might now, without danger to his professional character, indulge his inclination for the ornamental parts of literature; and an occasion offered in which he had the happiness of rendering his taste and his benevolence equally conspicuous. On a visit to his native country in 1792 he had become personally acquainted with that rustic son of genius *Robert Burns*. This extraordinary but unfortunate man having at his death left his family in great indigence, a subscription was made in Scotland for their immediate relief, and at the same time a design was formed of publishing an edition of his printed works and remains for their emolument. Mr. Syme of Ryedale, an old and intimate friend of Dr. Currie, strongly urged him to undertake the office of editor; and to this request, in which other friends of the poet's memory concurred, he could not withhold his acquiescence, notwithstanding his multiplied engagements. In 1800 he published in 4 volumes, 8vo, *The Works of Robert Burns, with an Account of his Life, and a Criticism on his Writings: to which are prefixed some Observations on the Character and Condition of the Scottish Peasantry.* These volumes were a rich

treat to the lovers of poetry and elegant literature; and Dr. Currie's part in them, as a biographer and critic, was greatly admired, as well for beauty of style as for liberality of sentiment and sagacity of remark. If any objection was made to him as an editor on account of unnecessary extension of the materials, the kind purpose for which the publication was undertaken pleaded his excuse with all who were capable of feeling its force. Its success fully equalled the most sanguine expectations.—Repeated editions produced a balance of profit which formed a little fortune for the destitute family; and Dr. Currie might congratulate himself on having been one of the most effectual friends of departed genius that the annals of British poetry record.

Every plan for promoting liberal studies and the improvement of the human mind had in him a zealous and active supporter. In the formation of those literary institutions which have done so much honor to the town of Liverpool, he, with his intimate and congenial friend, the distinguished author of the Lives of Lorenzo de' Medici and Leo X., stood among the foremost; and their names were always conjoined when mention was made of the worth and talents which dignified their place of abode. No cultivated traveller vi-

sited Liverpool without soliciting Dr. Currie's acquaintance, and his reception of those introduced to him was eminently polite and hospitable.

In his Life of Burns, remarking upon that partiality for their own country which appears almost universally in the natives of Scotland, he has observed, that "it differs in its character according to the character of the different minds in which it is found; in some appearing a selfish prejudice, in others a generous affection." He was himself a striking exemplification of this fact; for the sentiment in him was principally shown in the kindness with which he received all his young countrymen who came recommended to his notice, and the zeal with which he exerted himself to procure them situations suited to their qualifications. Indeed, a disposition in general to favor the progress of deserving young persons was a prominent feature in his character. He loved to converse with them, and mingled valuable information with cheering encouragement.

Though externally of a vigorous frame of body, Dr. Currie had a predisposition to those complaints which usually shorten life; and in the year 1784 he had experienced a pulmonary attack of an alarming nature, from which he was extraordinarily recovered by the use of horse-exercise, as related by himself in his case inserted in the

second volume of Dr. Darwin's Zoonomia. He was, however, seldom long free from threatenings of a return, and his health began visibly to decline in the early part of 1804. In the summer of that year he took a journey to Scotland, where among other sources of gratification he had that of witnessing the happy effects of his kindness on the family of Burns. His letters on this occasion were delightful displays of benevolence rejoicing in its work. He returned with some temporary amendment; but alarming symptoms soon returned, and in November he found it necessary to quit the climate and business of Liverpool. How severely his departure was felt by those who had been accustomed to commit their health and that of their families to his skill and tenderness, can only be estimated by those who have experienced a similar loss. He spent the winter alternately at Clifton and Bath; and in the month of March appeared to himself in a state of convalescence which justified his taking a house in Bath, and commencing the practice of his profession. From the manner in which his career opened, there could be no doubt that it would have proved eminently successful; but the concluding scene was hastily approaching. As a last resource he went in August to Sidmouth, where, after much suffering, which he bore with manly fortitude and pious resigna-

tion, he expired on August 31st, 1805, in the 50th year of his age. His disease was ascertained to be a great enlargement and flaccidity of the heart, accompanied with remarkable wasting of the left lung, but without ulceration, tubercle, or abscess.

Few men have left the world with a more amiable and estimable character, proved in every relation of life public and domestic. In his professional conduct he was upright, liberal, and honorable, with much sensibility for his patients without the affectation of it; fair and candid towards his brethren of the faculty; and though usually decided in his opinion, yet entirely free from arrogance or dogmatism. His behaviour was singularly calculated to convert rivals into friends; and some of those who regarded him with the greatest esteem and affection have been the persons who divided practice with him. To his character in this point a most honorable testimony has been given in a short article inserted in a Bath newspaper by the worthy and learned Dr. Falconer. His powers of mind were of the highest rank, equally fitted for action and speculation: his morals were pure; his principles exalted. His life, though much too short to satisfy the wishes of his friends and family, was long enough for signal usefulness and for lasting fame.

(H.) p. 253.

MEMOIR

OF

MR. WALKER.

THE Rev. George Walker, F.R.S., whose death has been sincerely lamented by a number of affectionate relatives and friends, was born about the year 1734 at Newcastle-upon-Tyne, in which town his father was a respectable tradesman. He was sent at an early age to the free-school of his native place, then under the care of the Rev. Dr. Moises. In this seminary he gave very early tokens of an uncommon capacity for literary acquirements; and passed some years with the advantage that might be expected under a master whose professional reputation was very high, and whose success in instruction has been proved by the eminence to which several of his pupils have risen, among whom may be enumerated the present Lord Chancellor, and his brother Sir Wm. Scott. It may be interesting to mention that Mr. Walker, four years before his death, visited

his first venerable instructor, then in extreme old age, who gave him a most cordial reception, and spoke of him as one whom he had a pride in numbering among his scholars, and who had fully realized his expectation concerning his future proficiency.

At the age of ten, he was sent to his uncle, the Rev. Thomas Walker[a], a dissenting minister of great respectability at Durham, who had hitherto directed his education, and continued to superintend it, with the view of fitting him for his own profession. In this city he pursued his classical studies in the grammar-school, then flourishing under a head-master of great abilities, whom his scholar always recollected with a kind of enthusiastic veneration. He was thoroughly grounded in the Greek and Latin languages, and was, besides, furnished with much general knowledge from his uncle's instructions, when he was removed to the university of Edinburgh. He was there a pupil of that eminent mathematician Dr. Matthew Stewart, from whom he imbibed that pure and elegant taste in mathematical speculations, by which both tutor and pupil have been so much distinguished. He did not, however, find

[a] This gentleman, though highly esteemed among his brethren, was known to the public only by a single sermon preached at the opening of the new meeting at Wakefield in the year 1752.

this school favorable to those theological studies on which his mind was principally bent; and he removed to the university of Glasgow, then in reputation for its lectures in divinity and moral philosophy, and there completed his education.

Mr. Walker's first settlement as a minister was at Durham, about the year 1756, as successor to his uncle, who had removed to Leeds. He continued there about seven years, and then accepted an invitation to Great Yarmouth. Of the general respect and esteem which he enjoyed in that place during a residence of several years, there are many still living witnesses. Few men, indeed, have been better qualified to shine and interest in society. Well acquainted with all the best authors, especially in history, ancient and modern; accustomed to free and enlarged discussion of topics of the greatest importance to mankind; and gifted with a warm and copious eloquence; he attracted general notice and deference in conversation. At the same time, his thoroughly amiable and benevolent disposition, his cheerful, open, and companionable nature, and his unaffected simplicity, endeared him in an uncommon degree to all within the sphere of his intimacy. He married at Yarmouth in 1772, and not long after removed to Warrington, as mathematical tutor in the academy at that place.

To the affection and regard which he inspired in the breasts of all with whom he was connected in that institution, I can bear a heartfelt testimony; as I had the happiness of being one of the social circle to which he imparted so much animation. He had, unfortunately, too much cause to be dissatisfied by the failure of the moderate expectations of emolument which were held out to him on his removal. I know not that blame was imputable to any individual on this account; but, in fact, the alma mater of Warrington was ever a niggardly recompencer of the distinguished abilities and virtues which were enlisted in her service. Mr. Walker, while a single man, had exercised a prudent economy, which had enabled him to collect a valuable library, and also to indulge his taste for prints, of which he possessed a number of specimens from the early Italian and other masters, purchased with judgement, and at a price greatly inferior to that which they at present bear. As a house-keeper, his inclination led him to a boundless hospitality; and though his personal habits of life were simple and unexpensive, in the calls of charity and of social entertainment he knew no stint. At what period he became a fellow of the Royal Society, I am uninformed; but he was so when he printed at Warrington his *Doctrine of the Sphere*, a 4to volume, published in 1775, with

many plates of a peculiar construction, and which cost him much labor. This is considered by the best judges as a very complete treatise on the subject, and an example of the purest method of geometrical demonstration.

He removed about the beginning of 1775 to Nottingham, to occupy the station of one of the ministers of the High Pavement meeting. This town was the place of his longest residence, and the scene of his principal activity and usefulness as a *public character*. Mr. Walker had long been a deep thinker upon political subjects, and had imbibed, with all the ardor and decision of his character, those principles of civil and religious liberty which are by many regarded as fundamental to a free constitution, and of the highest importance to human society. Nottingham is one of the few places in this kingdom in which such principles are allied to municipal power and magistracy; he had therefore a large field for extending the influence of his knowledge and eloquence over public assemblies. As the period of his residence there comprehended the whole of the American war, the efforts made for the reform of parliament, the first applications for the abolition of the slave trade, and the discussion of various other important points,—his advice and assistance were frequently called for in the political measures

adopted by the town and corporation of Nottingham; and nearly all the petitions which at different times were thence addressed to the king and the house of commons were the productions of his pen, and were marked with his characteristic energy of language and sentiment. One of these, the petition for recognising American independence, made such an impression on the mind of Mr. Burke, then a distinguished champion of the same cause, that in the debate consequent upon it he declared he had rather have been the author of that piece than of all his own compositions. Although, in the contest of parties, the zeal and warmth of Mr. Walker necessarily gave much occasional offence to persons in opposite interests, yet the kindness of his heart, and the even playful ease and cheerfulness of his social conversation, softened animosity, and would not permit those to hate the man, who hated his principles. It is needless to add, that by those who agreed with him in sentiments he was beloved and valued to the borders of enthusiasm.

The death of some of his most intimate friends, and the prospect of extending his usefulness in a different sphere of action, induced him, after a residence of 24 years at Nottingham, to accept the post of theological tutor and superintendant of the dissenting academy at Manchester, which was in

some degree the successor of that at Warrington, though upon a more contracted scale. Although, in point of extent of knowledge, and disinterested zeal in performing the duties of his office, Mr. Walker was excellently qualified for such a situation, yet it must be confessed that an habitual want of punctuality, and a forgetfulness of engagements occasioned by the ardor with which he entered into any present subject of meditation or discussion, were unfavorable to the maintenance of that order and discipline which are essential to an institution for education. His advancing years likewise rendered the labors of such a charge more onerous to him; and at the same time the institution was languishing under some external causes of decline. At length, the whole burthen of theological, classical, and mathematical tuition having fallen upon him, he found himself unequal to the task, and finally resigned his office. It should be added, that during his residence at Manchester, he was an active member of the Literary and Philosophical Society of that place, before which he read several papers, and which, upon the decease of Dr. Percival, chose him for its president.

His final removal was to the village of Wavertree, near Liverpool, which situation was selected by him on account of its vicinity to some warm and congenial friends, with whom he hoped to

spend the tranquil evening of his days. His principal employment here was to revise and put in order his various compositions both printed and manuscript. He had published several single sermons on particular occasions while at Nottingham, and had printed two volumes of sermons in 1790. These were all distinguished by singular spirit and vivacity of expression, and a manly, fervid, and original cast of thought. He had also written an *Appeal to the People of England* upon the subject of the test laws, which was considered as a piece of peculiar excellence by that liberal and enlightened statesman, the late Mr. Fox. Besides his work on the Sphere, he had published the first part of a *Treatise of Conic Sections*, a work worthy of his mathematical reputation[a].

[a] The following remarkable circumstance relative to this work has been related to me by W. Frend, Esq. When Mr. Frend was in Germany, he accidentally met with a copy of a Treatise on Conic Sections, by Father Boscovich, with which he was so much pleased, that on his return he made it the foundation of the lectures on that subject which he gave as a public tutor in the university of Cambridge. When he lost that situation, he presented his mathematical papers to his successor, the Rev. Mr. Newton, who drew up a work on Conic Sections upon the plan thus derived from Boscovich. This was offered to the university press just at the time when Mr. Walker presented to the curators an original work on that subject for the same purpose. This was found so much to resemble the other (though Mr. W. had certainly never seen the work of Boscovich), that the university thought it superfluous to print both, and naturally gave the preference to that of its own member.

The republication of his Sermons, with the addition of two more volumes, and also of two volumes of *Philosophical Essays*, was an important concern which brought him to London in the spring of the year 1807.

Soon after his arrival I was favored with a visit from him, of great cordiality, in which he pathetically observed that we two were the only remaining relics of the Warrington academical society. Indeed it has been my lot, since the year 1797, to lament in private, and publicly to commemorate, three distinguished members of the same fraternity (Dr. Enfield, Dr. Priestley, and Mr. Wakefield), besides the excellent person who now employs my pen. Mr. Walker appeared to me not at all declined in health and spirits since last I saw him, though with some marks of increased age. He himself, however, was probably conscious of more debility than was apparent; for he dropped several expressions denoting that he did not expect long to survive. He was soon after attacked with what seemed to be a severe lumbago, which rendered motion extremely painful, and fixed him, at first to his chair, and then to his bed. His recollection at the same time became sensibly impaired, and at length totally left him. Under these symptoms he rapidly sunk; and on the morning of April 21st, after an act of fervent

prayer, expressed by his folded hands when the power of articulation was nearly gone, he calmly resigned his soul to his Maker. From the house of his kind friend and former pupil, Mr. Smith of Draper's-hall, with whom he had been a guest, his remains were carried, with a respectable attendance of friends, for interment in Bunhill-fields. He left a widow, together with one son, and a daughter married to Sir George Cayley, Bart. of Brompton-house, near Scarborough.

I cannot close this account without adding a sketch of Mr. Walker's character from the masterly hand of a friend who resembled him in several striking features, the late Gilbert Wakefield. In his *Memoirs* after giving a just estimate of Mr. Walker's intellectual talents and attainments, he thus proceeds. "But these qualifications, great and estimable as they are, constitute but a mean portion of his praise. Art thou looking, reader! like Æsop in the fable, for a MAN? Dost thou want an intrepid spirit in the cause of truth, liberty, and virtue—an undeviating rectitude of action—a boundless hospitality—a mind infinitely superior to every sensation of malice and resentment—a breast susceptible of the truest friendship, and overflowing with the milk of human kindness—an ardor, an enthusiasm, in laudable pursuits, characteristic of magnanimity—an unwearied assi-

duity, even to his own hindrance, in public service? My experience can assure thee, that thy pursuit may cease, thy doubts be banished, and thy hopes realized: for this is the man."

To such praise, which honors equally the giver and the receiver, it would be impertinent to make any other addition, than a testimony of its justice.

END OF VOL. I.

Printed by Richard Taylor,
Shoe-lane, London.

WELLS BINDERY
WALTHAM, MASS.
APRIL 1940

3 2044 029 879 137

JUN 01 1992